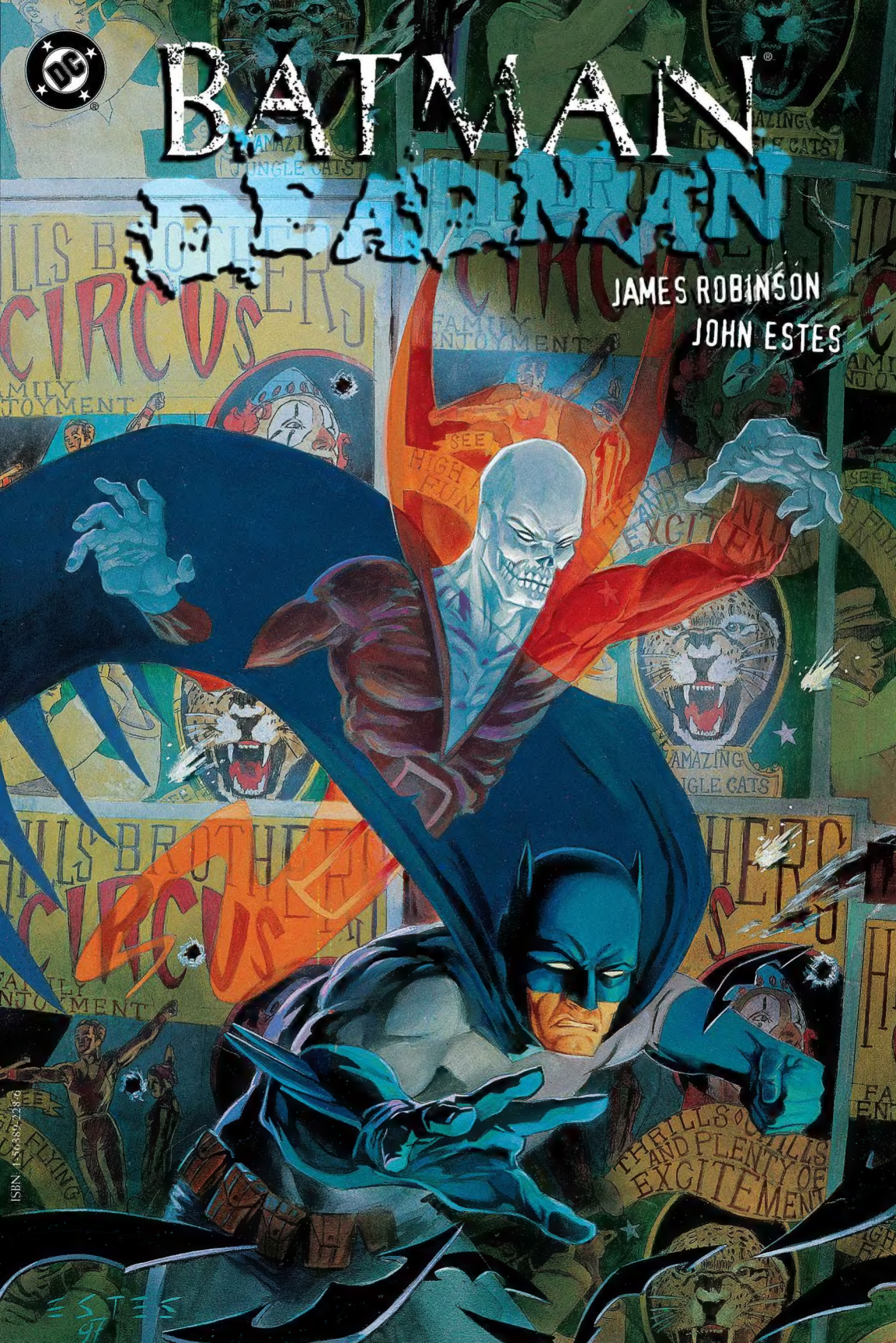




# BATMAN

## LEAGUE OF SHADOWS

JAMES ROBINSON  
JOHN ESTES



ISBN 1-56385-228-6

ESTES  
97



# BATMAN/DEADMAN

DEATH AND GLORY

BY JAMES ROBINSON

AND JOHN ESTES

LETTERED BY TODD KLEIN

Batman created by Bob Kane

D C Comics



If any of you don't know that life is frightening and that one of the things that makes it frightening is the inevitability of death, you're excused. You're probably either a saint, enlightened or hopelessly obtuse and nothing I have to say will mean much to you. Possibly you won't fully enjoy *Death and Glory*, the graphic novel that is the main attraction of this volume, either: oh, you'll like the painted artwork by John Estes and the neatly-turned plot and dialogue by James Robinson, maybe, but the story won't bore into your soul. If you're a saint, enlightened or obtuse. If you're like most of the rest of us, you'll enjoy the technical accomplishments of Messrs. Estes and Robinson and the dark tale they have to tell. One way or another, as the title indicates, it's about death which scares us and because it scares us, is also endlessly fascinating.

Given the characters featured, it *has* to be about death. Batman—born Bruce Wayne—is who he is because he witnessed the slaying of his parents. Later, he adopted the persona of a bat—in a healthy handful of mythologies, the mammal that embodies or incarnates the spirits of the deceased. Every night he emerges like a wraith from a cave—a hole in the ground—to wreak vengeance on wrongdoers, mostly killers. He can't do anything about the monster who murdered his mother and father, but he *can* deal justice to similar monsters. And he *does*—he *has*, in fact, ever since he first appeared in Detective Comics, dated May, 1939.

Batman is *like* a wraith. Deadman goes him one better—Deadman *is* a wraith. His origin story, published in Strange Adventures in October of 1967, shows us Boston Brand, a star aerialist, killed by a sniper's bullet as he performs his circus act. Later events doom him to wander the Earth, a ghost, until he finds his slayer.

Batman and Deadman are superficially dissimilar. For openers, they don't look alike: Batman's mien is as dark as his namesake while Deadman, having died in his performing togs, is actually quite colorful. Their personalities are equally contrasting: Batman is cool, rational, his personal torments carefully concealed behind an implacable facade. Deadman is anything but implacable: when he was alive he was impulsive and violent; as a specter, he is the embodiment (or *disembodiment*) of rage.

Two very different characters? Well, yes. But also similar: they have the same mission, really—a mission of redress. They are as helpless before the fact of death as any of us, but they *can* do something about those who end life for reasons of personal greed and hatred. Watching them devote themselves to this mission is absorbing, and watching them do it together is both absorbing and logical.

Logical, anyway, in terms of drama and graphic storytelling. They've been a team dozens of times in the past 30-odd years as any number of writers and artists saw the possibilities in teaming them in the same narrative. The result, for which we are grateful, has been a lot of good stories.

Add *Death and Glory* to the list, and rank it high. It is an example of modern, sophisticated comics that all who appreciate the form will applaud and a tale that might just, indeed, bore into your soul. Unless you're saintly, enlightened or obtuse. And maybe even then.





TICK

TICK

TICK

HA

TICK

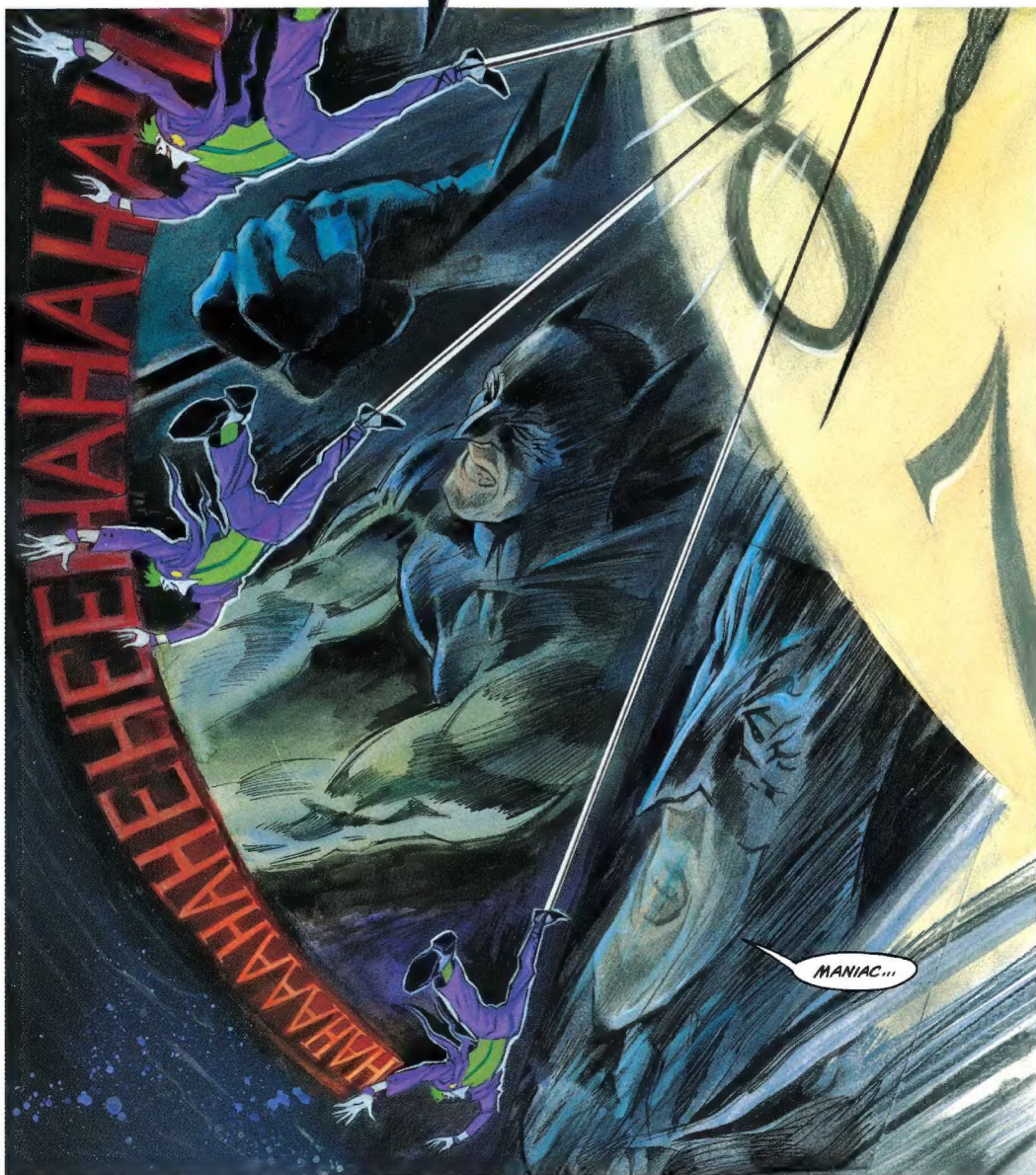


























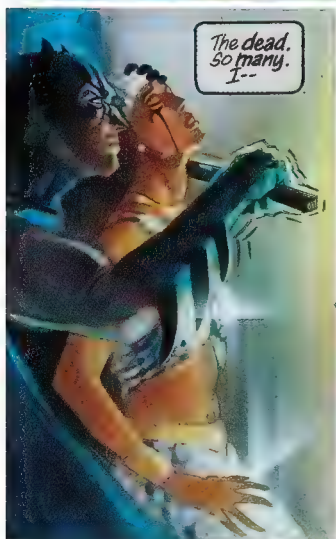
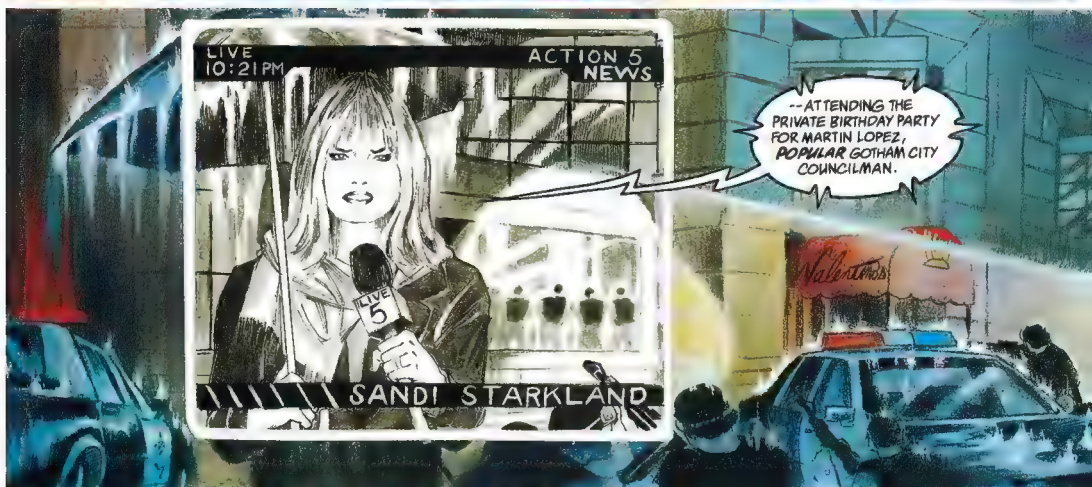
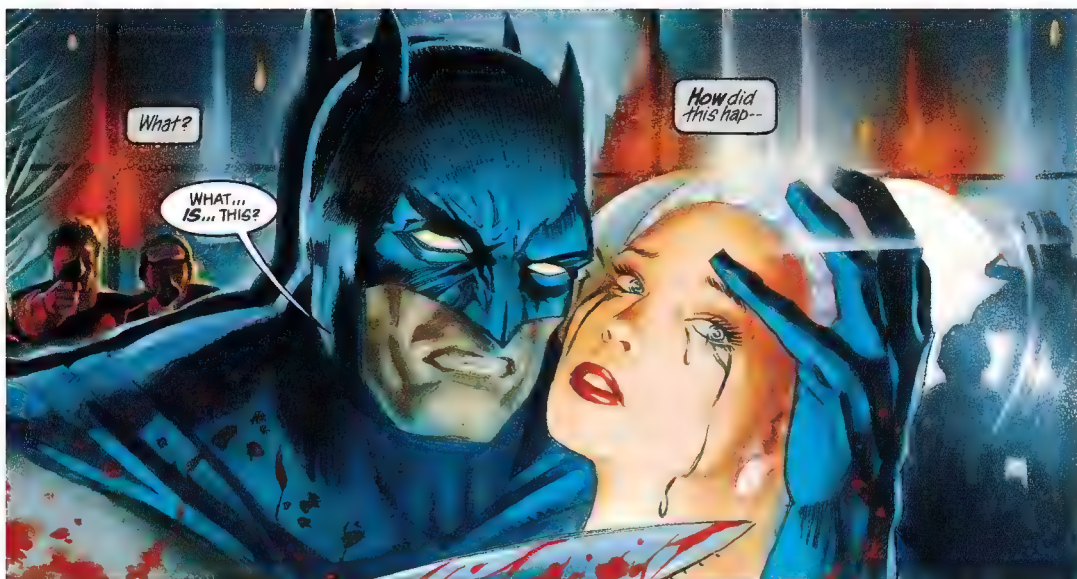






...ROPE...?









BATMAN, LISTEN CAREFULLY. YOU ARE SURROUNDED. YOU CAN NOT ESCAPE...

...PUT THE KNIFE DOWN AND LET THE GIRL GO.

HE KILLED THEM ALL! BUTCHERED THEM! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT. MARTIN LOPEZ... HIS FAMILY. HIS... MY FRIENDS. ALL OF THEM.

THEY SAID HE WAS CLOSE TO THE EDGE. THEY ALL TOLD ME. DIDN'T THINK HE'D SNAP. NOT LIKE THIS.



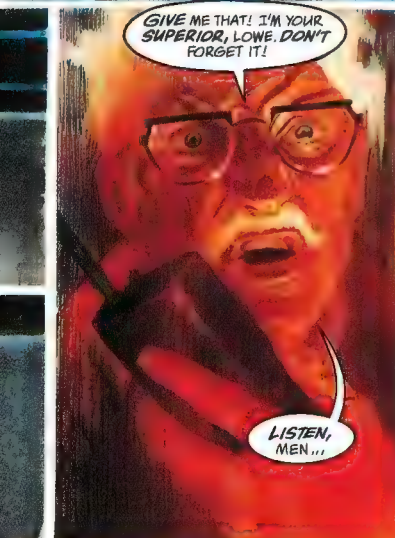
THE MURDER OF LOPEZ, A CLOSE FRIEND OF GORDON, HAS PRODUCED AN UNEXPECTED HOSTILITY FROM THE COMMISSIONER...



"...TOWARDS THE VIGILANTE, BATMAN."

HE'S A MAD DOG. HE NEEDS TO BE BROUGHT DOWN. NOW!

NO! WE HAVE MEN IN THERE. WE HAVE A HOSTAGE AT RISK. NO SHOOTING. THAT IS FINAL!



GIVE ME THAT! I'M YOUR SUPERIOR, LOWE. DON'T FORGET IT!

LISTEN, MEN...



...THIS IS YOUR COMMISSIONER.

AS SOON AS YOU CAN... SHOOT TO KILL. YOU GOT THAT?!



I'M WORKING WITH YOU HERE. DON'T DO ANYTHING--

HEY, BATS...



...I BET YOU'D RATHER BE IN BOSTON.





KPOW  
KPOW  
KPOW  
KPOW

CRACK

MURREY'S  
GONE CRAZY!

SHOOTING  
EVERYWHERE!  
WHAT THE--

THWAK

BANG BANG  
BANG BANG  
BANG

UHH





SWAT member  
scattering  
his own men.

I don't  
understand.



...but...

...use...

...distraction.

BANG

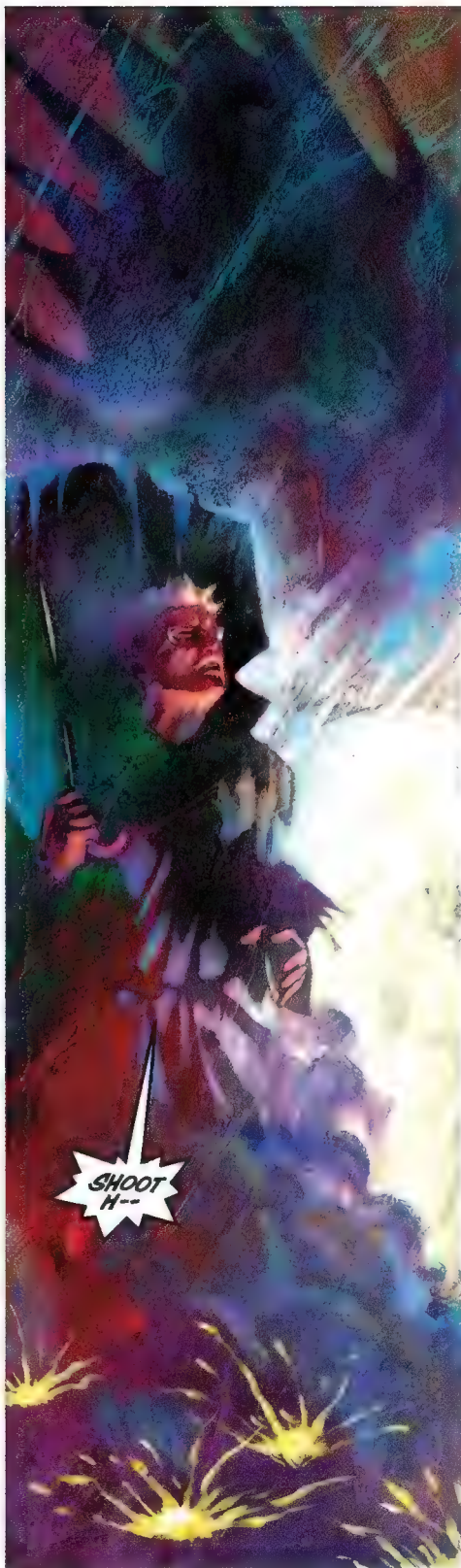
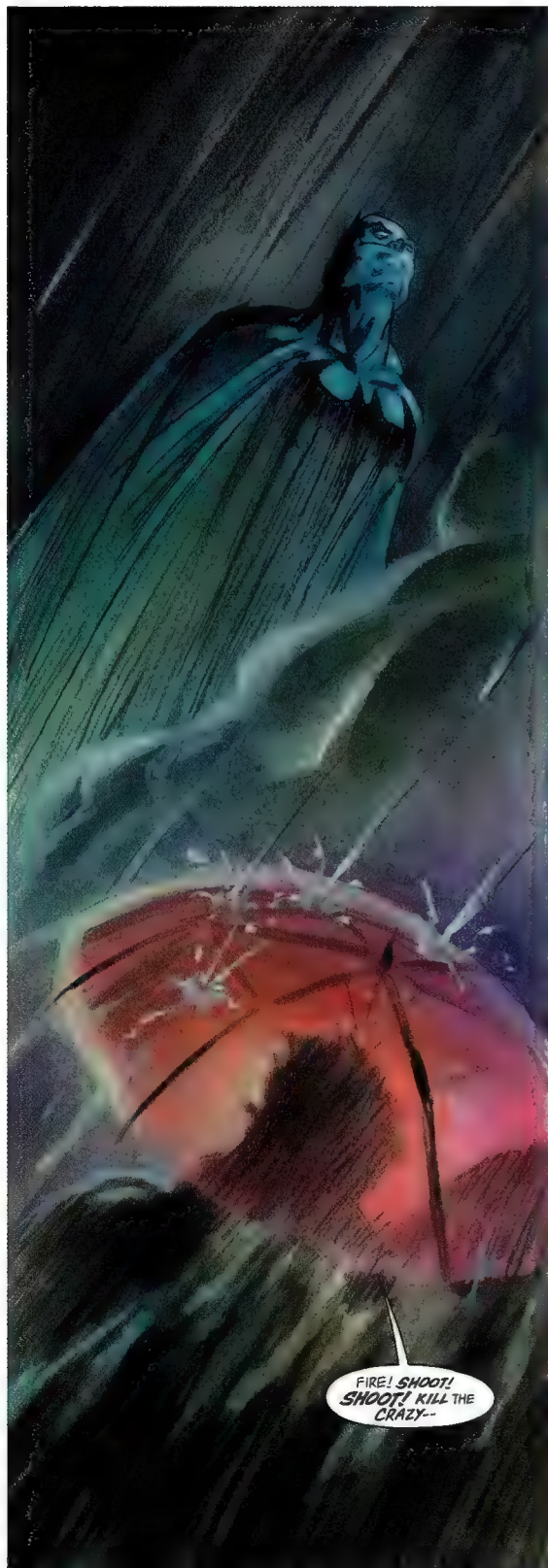
THUNK

BANG

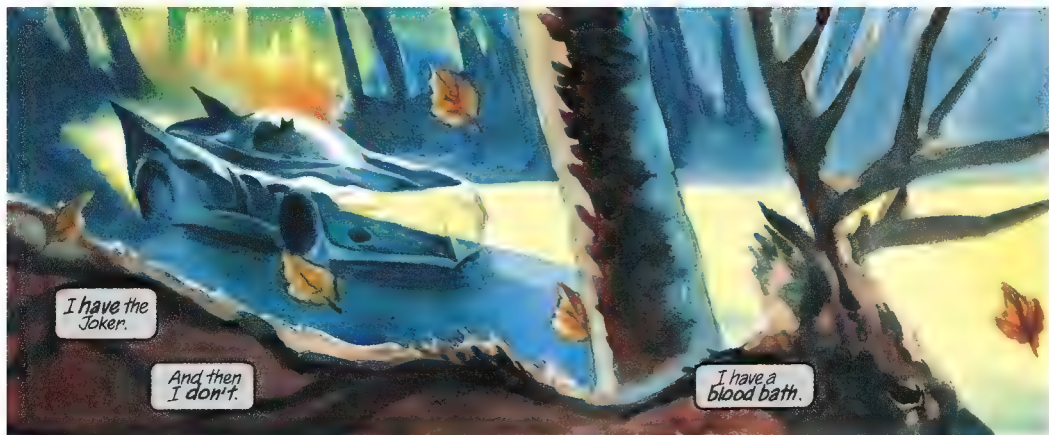












I have the  
Joker.

And then  
I don't.

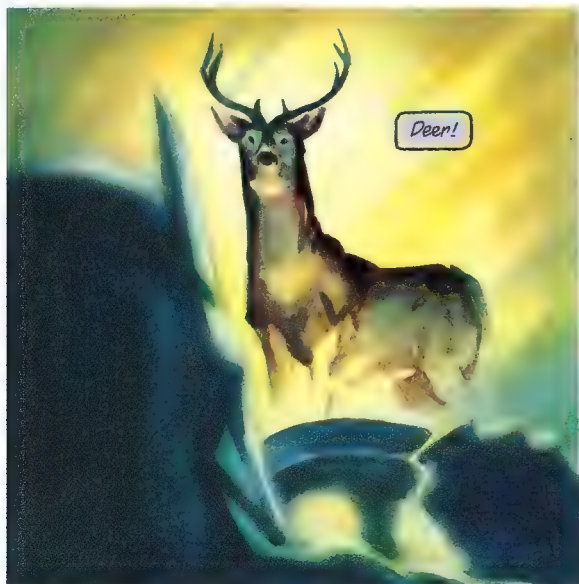
I have a  
blood bath.



An hour.

What happened  
in that hour?

I need to...  
need to...  
study the  
facts.



Deer!



Brake!

CLOSE.

Almost--









-- BRINGS THE  
STARTLING NEWS TODAY  
THAT BATMAN ATTACKED  
A RESTAURANT--

TODAY ON  
CURRENT EVENT...  
"BATMAN/  
BATMANIAC!"

--SO, DR. STROTHERS,  
TELL US WHAT YOU FEEL  
REGARDING THIS.

WELL, ANGELA, I  
FEEL THE VIGILANTE'S  
SELF-APPOINTED  
WAR ON CRIME HAS  
CAUSED--

DR. STROTHERS, EARLIER  
ON ANOTHER SHOW, STATED THAT  
BATMAN'S PSYCHOTIC EPISODE WAS  
DUE TO THE STRAIN OF HIS  
LIFE BATTLING CRIME.

TODAY ON INSIDE  
AFFAIR... "BATMAN GONE  
BATTY."

COMING FORWARD,  
YVONNE CONNER, CLAIM-  
ING TO HAVE BEEN BATMAN'S  
SECRET LOVER FOR  
MANY YEARS.

ACCORDING TO  
MISS CONNER, DIVORCED  
MOTHER OF TWO, BATMAN'S  
MADNESS IS DUE TO--





MISS CONNER?  
MOTHER OF TWO? WILL  
SHE BE COMING TO STAY?  
I'LL HAVE THE NURSERY  
REPAINTED.





DON'T BELIEVE  
EVERYTHING YOU  
HEAR ON TELE-  
VISION.

OH BUT I  
DO, SIR. EVERY  
WONDERFUL  
WORD.

GORDON HERE...  
HIS HATE... IS SOMETHING  
I DON'T BELIEVE.

OR  
WISH I  
DIDN'T.

I WANT HIM.  
I WANT HIM ALIVE  
OR DEAD, BUT I  
WANT HIM.

I'VE NEVER KNOWN  
JIM THIS... VENGEFUL.  
ESPECIALLY AGAINST  
ME. IT'S--

A LITTLE HARD  
TO TAKE? I'M SURE.  
BUT YOU MUST  
UNDERSTAND, MASTER  
BRUCE, MARTIN LOPEZ  
WAS A DEAR FRIEND  
OF THE COMMIS-  
SIONER'S.

I'M SURE GORDON  
IS MERELY REACTING  
TO THE SHOCK OF  
HIS LOSS.

I HOPE,  
ALFRED. I  
HOPE.

MISS CUMMINGS, THE SOLE  
SURVIVOR OF LAST NIGHT'S SLAUGHTER,  
NOTED THAT THROUGHOUT THE  
MURDERS BATMAN REPEATEDLY CRIED  
OUT FOR "YEATS," CLAIMING THIS  
MAN WAS IN THE BUILDING.


WHO THIS YEATS MIGHT  
BE, AND WHETHER HE ACTUALLY  
EXISTS OR IS MERELY MORE OF  
BATMAN'S APPARENT PSYCHOSIS  
IS SOMETHING THE POLICE  
ARE APPARENTLY INVESTIGATING  
FURTHER.

THIS SITUATION... SO  
MUCH UNEXPLAINABLE.  
I'M SHOOTING IN THE  
DARK HERE BUT...

...PERHAPS THERE MIGHT  
BE SOME SUPERNATURAL  
ELEMENT TO IT.

OH, I KNOW  
THERE IS. I KNOW  
WHAT... OR RATHER  
WHO.





HE'S BEEN RUNNING... WITHOUT A MOMENT EVEN TO CATCH HIS BREATH... FOR DAYS NOW. DAYS.

HE KNOWS THIS IS HIS TALENT... NOT RUNNING EXACTLY, BUT FLEEING... RUNNING FROM. HIS WHOLE LIFE. FROM PARENTS HE COULDN'T LIVE WITH, AN EDUCATION HE FOUND TOO DIFFICULT, A MARRIAGE AND FATHERHOOD HE FOUND TOO DEMANDING, AND FROM THE MEN IN THE MANY CITIES HE'S PASSED THROUGH, WHO HE ENDED UP OWING MONEY FOR THIS BET OR THAT WAGER.

OH YES, ALBERT YEATS IS GOOD AT RUNNING FROM. VERY GOOD.

BUT THIS... THE TERRIBLE EVENTS THAT BEGAN WITH THE MILLIONAIRE AND THE MAGE. THAT MIGHT BE ONE OF THE THREE THINGS HE CAN'T ELUDE.

FIRSTLY THE MAGE HAS MEN (AT LEAST YEATS THINKS THEY'RE MEN) WHO HUNT HIM.

THEN THERE IS BATMAN, WHO HUNTS HIM TOO. THIS NEW, TERRIFYING VERSION OF THE BATMAN HE'S KNOWN FROM TELEVISION AND MAGAZINES... WHO CAME TO THE RESTAURANT FOR HIM... CAME AND KILLED.

AND THERE IS THE FINAL THING... THE LAST, FINAL, THIRD THING. AND NO MATTER HOW FAST OR FAR HE RUNS... NO MATTER HOW WELL HE HIDES... THIS LAST THING CAN'T BE ELUDED.

NO MATTER HOW FAST.

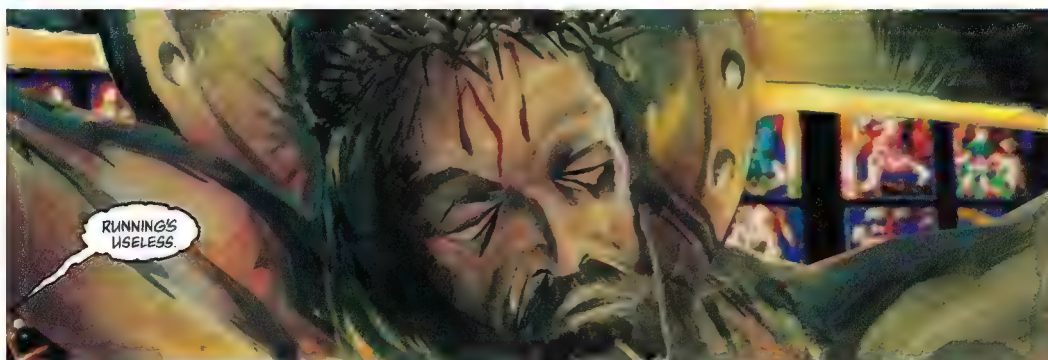
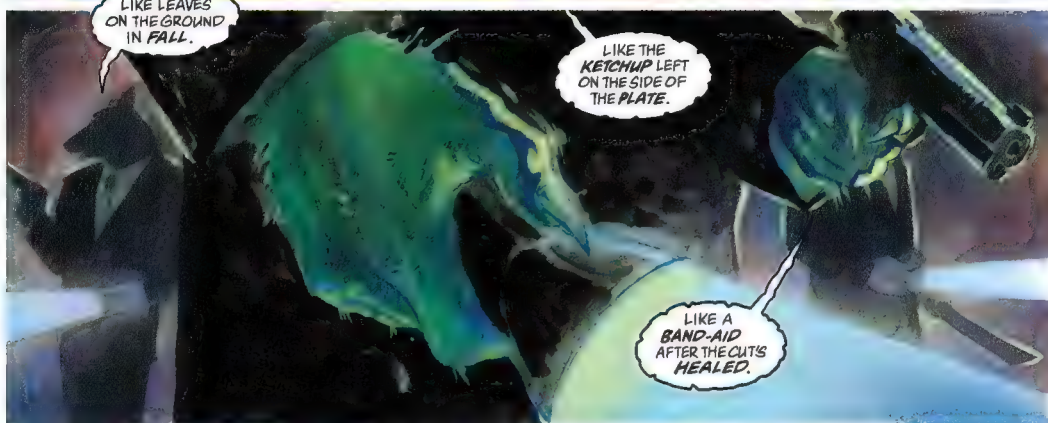
NO MATTER HOW FAR.

ALBERT YEATS HAS AIDS.

OH, AL... BERT.





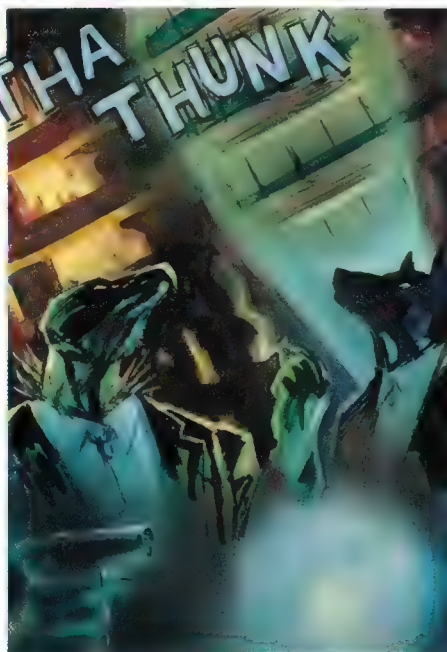






DON'T RESIST THE  
INEVITABLE. IF WE DON'T  
CATCH YOU NOW, YOU KNOW  
WE'LL CATCH YOU LATER.

ARE YOU LISTENING,  
ALBERT? YOU CAN'T ESCAPE  
THE INEVITABLE.



IF ANYBODY  
KNOWS THAT...

... IT'S ALBERT  
YEATS.

BUT *STILL*  
HE RUNS.





I MUST BE VERY  
IMPORTANT, FOR YOU TO  
BREAK INTO PRISON...



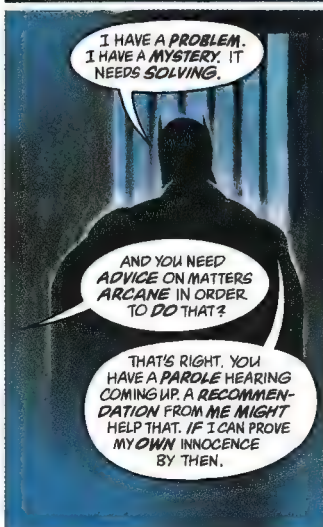
...FOR YOU  
TO RISK CAPTURE  
HERE.

YOU'RE THE  
ONLY "MAGICAL VILLAIN"  
CURRENTLY BEHIND BARS,  
FAUST. THAT'S WHY  
I'M HERE.

I'M A MAGICAL  
VILLAIN? WHY,  
THANK YOU.

THAT'S HOW THE  
NEWSPAPERS TERM SUCH  
AS YOU. NOTHING MORE.  
DON'T LET IT GO TO  
YOUR HEAD.

I NEED  
YOUR TALENTS,  
FAUST.



I HAVE A PROBLEM.  
I HAVE A MYSTERY. IT  
NEEDS SOLVING.

AND YOU NEED  
ADVICE ON MATTERS  
ARCANE IN ORDER  
TO DO THAT?

THAT'S RIGHT. YOU  
HAVE A PAROLE HEARING  
COMING UP. A RECOMMEN-  
DATION FROM ME MIGHT  
HELP THAT. IF I CAN PROVE  
MY OWN INNOCENCE  
BY THEN.



AND IF I  
REFUSE?

THERE'S THE CHANCE  
I COULD GO ON TO PROVE  
MY INNOCENCE WITHOUT  
YOU. I REPEAT, YOU HAVE  
A PAROLE HEARING  
COMING UP.

A WORD  
FROM ME MIGHT  
JUST AS EASILY  
HURT IT.

SO.

DO WE  
HAVE A DEAL,  
FAUST?



CALL ME  
FELIX.





SO THOSE  
ARE THE FACTS?

AS MANY  
AS YOU NEED  
TO KNOW.  
YES.



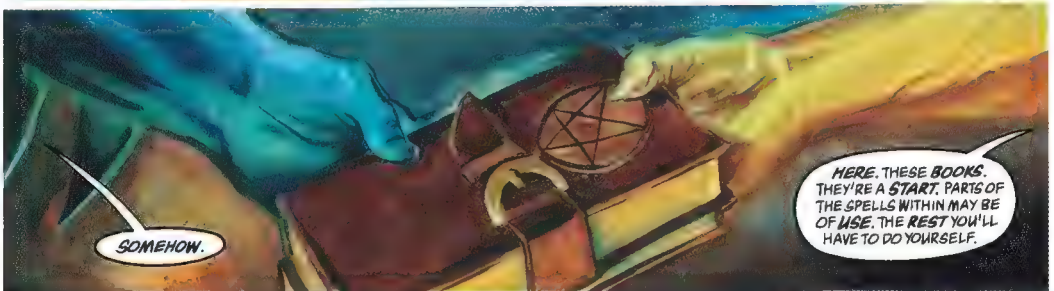
AND YOU THINK YOU  
KNOW WHO'S RESPONSIBLE?  
YOU THINK YOU WERE POS-  
SESSED BY A SPIRIT?



YES, BUT IT  
SADDENS ME TO  
COME TO THE CON-  
CLUSION. THAT SPIRIT  
AND I HAVE SOMETHING  
OF A HISTORY. A  
GOOD ONE UNTIL  
NOW.

I NEED TO CAPTURE THIS  
WRAITH. I NEED TO MAKE HIS SPIRIT  
FORM WHOLE AND TANGIBLE SO I  
CAN RESTRAIN HIM, QUESTION  
THE REASONS FOR HIS ACTIONS...

...AND ULTIMATELY PROVE IT  
WASN'T ME GOVERNING MYSELF  
WHEN I KILLED ALL THOSE PEOPLE



SOMEHOW.

HERE. THESE BOOKS.  
THEY'RE A START. PARTS OF  
THE SPELLS WITHIN MAY BE  
OF USE. THE REST YOU'LL  
HAVE TO DO YOURSELF.



OH, AND IT'S NOT  
SOMETHING I BROADCAST,  
BUT I DO POSSESS A SMALL  
AMOUNT OF PSYCHIC  
ABILITY.

I'M PICKING UP  
SOMETHING ABOUT THE  
SPIRIT IN QUESTION. HE WAS  
A RESTLESS GHOST WHO  
ONCE KNEW THE CHEERS  
OF THE CIRCUS CROWD.

BELIEVE  
ME, FAUST, I  
KNOW.





YOU KNOW  
WHAT I DON'T  
LIKE?

WHAT'S  
THAT?

WHEN PEOPLE  
PUT WALNUTS IN  
MY SALAD.



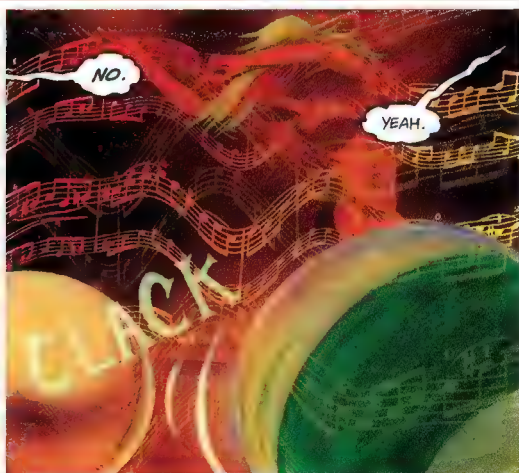
WAIT A MINUTE! WHO ON THIS  
PLANET PUTS WALNUTS IN A SALAD?  
WHEN DOES THAT EVER HAPPEN? 'CEPT  
OF COURSE, IF YOU ORDER A WALDORF.

THAT'S WHAT I  
ORDER. A WALDORF  
SALAD. THAT'S THE ONE  
I LIKE... EXCEPT  
WHEN THEY PUT  
WALNUTS IN IT.



THAT'S WHAT GOES  
IN A WALDORF SALAD,  
GENIUS... WALNUTS.  
WALDORF. WALNUTS.  
GET IT?

IN FACT, ANY  
TIME YOU GOT A WAL-  
DORF SALAD WITHOUT  
WALNUTS YOU WAS  
GYPPED.



NO.

YEAH.



YOU KNOW,  
MAYBE IT'S MUSHROOMS  
I DON'T LIKE IN SALADS  
ANYWAY.

I GIVE  
UP.

'N' I GAVE AT  
THE OFFICE. HEY,  
WHERE'S REMY? I  
THOUGHT HE'D BE  
HERE BY NOW.



HE'S GONE  
TO KEEP OUR  
BENEFACTOR  
SWEET.

HE'S AT  
CHAPLIN'S?

YEAH...

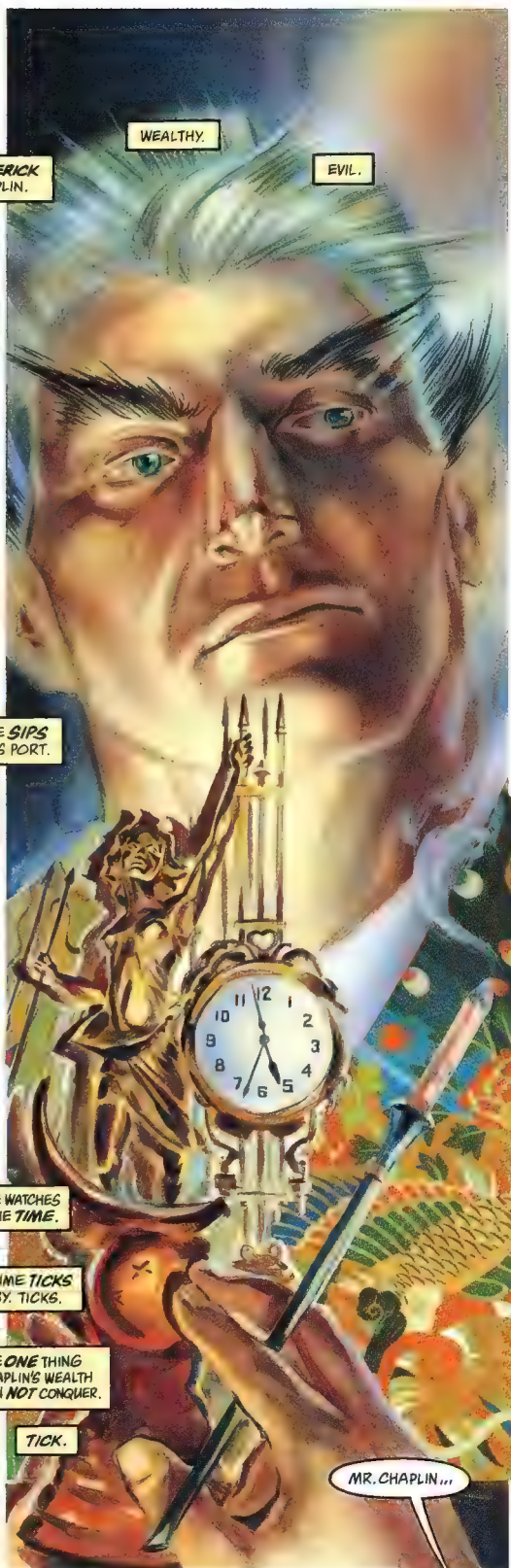




"...HE'S GONE  
TO SEE THE  
RICH GUY."

CHAPLIN.

FREDERICK  
CHAPLIN.



WEALTHY.

EVIL.

HE SIPS  
HIS PORT.

HE WATCHES  
THE TIME.

TIME TICKS  
BY TICKS.

THE ONE THING  
CHAPLIN'S WEALTH  
CAN NOT CONQUER.

TICK.

MR. CHAPLIN...









WE ALMOST CAUGHT  
YEATS. HE WAS IN A CHURCH.  
MY BOYS WERE CLOSE.

BUT  
HE GOT  
AWAY.

WELL YOU'RE  
RIGHT, THE NEWS ISN'T  
WONDERFUL.

IN FACT I'D GIVE  
YOU THE ARGUMENT  
THAT THE NEWS IS FAR  
FROM EVEN GOOD.



NO. DON'T WORRY.  
WE'LL FIND HIM. WE  
WERE CLOSE. THAT'S  
GOOD. IT MEANS THE  
NEXT TIME WE'LL  
BE CLOSER.

NOW I KNOW  
WHERE HE'S BEEN. I  
CAN FOLLOW HIS  
TRAIL... THE TRAIL OF  
PSYCHIC ENERGY  
WE ALL HAVE.

IT'S ONLY  
A MATTER OF  
TIME BEFORE  
THAT TRAIL  
WILL LEAD ME  
TO HIM.



A SMALL MATTER  
OF TIME, I HOPE, WE HAVE  
TWO DAYS TO FIND HIM.

WE  
WILL.

WE'D BETTER.  
NEED I REMIND YOU  
IT'S MY MONEY PAYING  
FOR YOU AND YOUR  
ABILITIES.

AND NEED I ALSO  
REMIND YOU, THAT IT'S NOT  
EVEN MY LIFE THAT'S AT  
STAKE IF WE DON'T FIND  
YEATS.



IT'S MY  
SOUL.

TICK.




MY  
IMMORTAL  
SOUL.

TICK.

TICK.



A full-page comic book illustration of Batman in a ritualistic pose. He is standing on a large, circular, golden floor plate with the word "LIBERTY" inscribed on it. He is wearing his blue and black suit with a long blue cape. His right arm is raised, and his left hand holds a glowing yellow book. The background is dark and atmospheric, with a large, colorful, ethereal figure in the upper right. The floor plate also features a small golden teapot and a small golden figure. A white circle highlights a small, green, lizard-like object on the floor plate. The overall tone is dramatic and mystical.

HE WAITED UNTIL  
THE REQUIRED  
TIME.

THOUGH HE'D NEEDED THE  
DELAY TO LEARN THIS RITE  
IN THE ANCIENT TONGUE OF  
A RACE OTHERWISE LONG  
LOST TO MODERN SCHOLARS.

AND HE'S NEEDED THE  
TIME TO PREPARE. TO  
PREPARE THE AREA.

AND TO PREPARE  
HIMSELF  
MENTALLY.

HE TREMBLES SLIGHTLY.  
THEN REALIZES THIS, SIGHS,  
AND REGAINS CONTROL.  
THE TREMBLING STOPS.

HE SIGHS  
AGAIN.

AND  
THEN.

ASSIS  
FOVAT  
DELEGIS

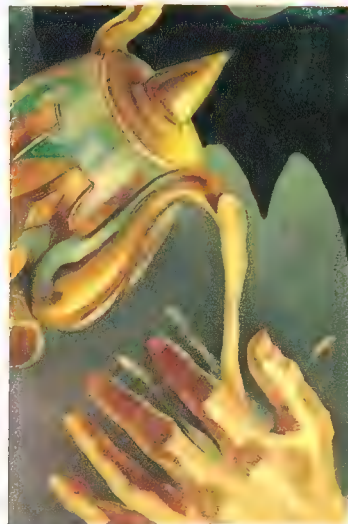




mmf...  
HU  
UHHRRR  
AA AA

SKREEE









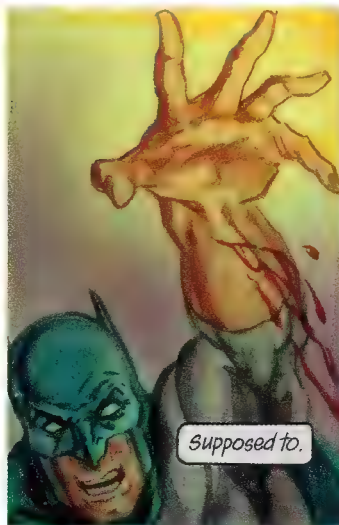
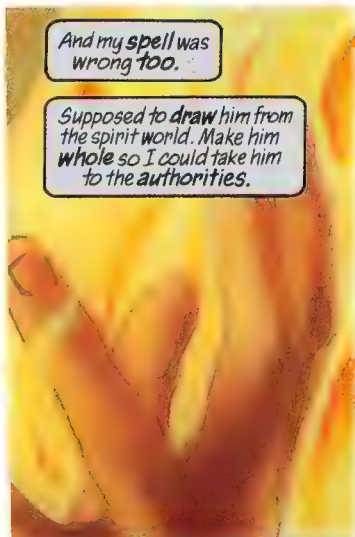
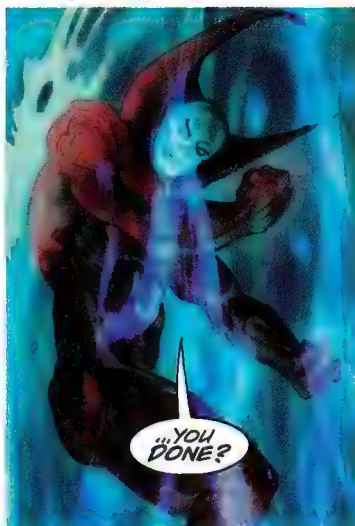
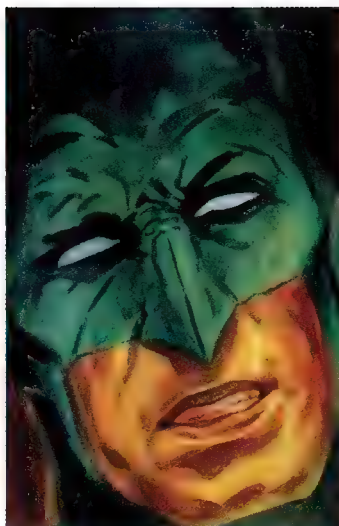




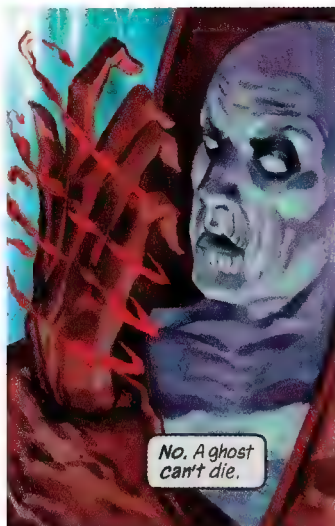












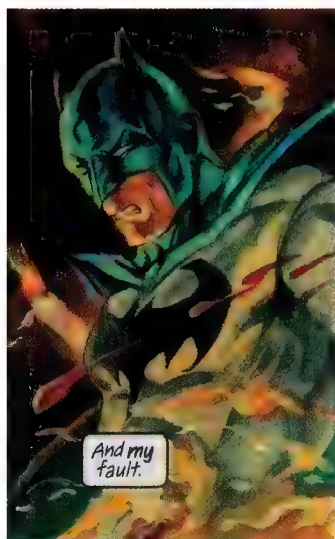
No. A ghost  
can't die.



It's draining  
him away.



His very  
essence.



And my  
fault.



Have to break  
the spell!

Destroy  
its hold.

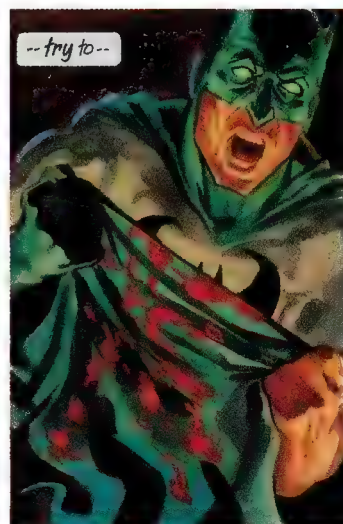
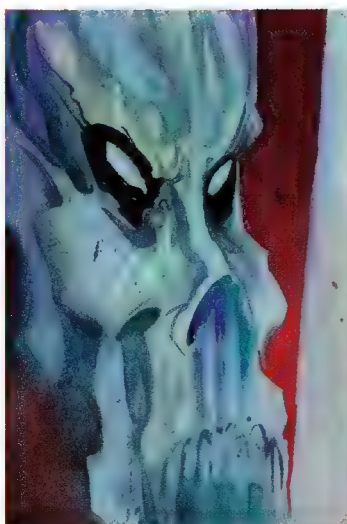


The chalice.



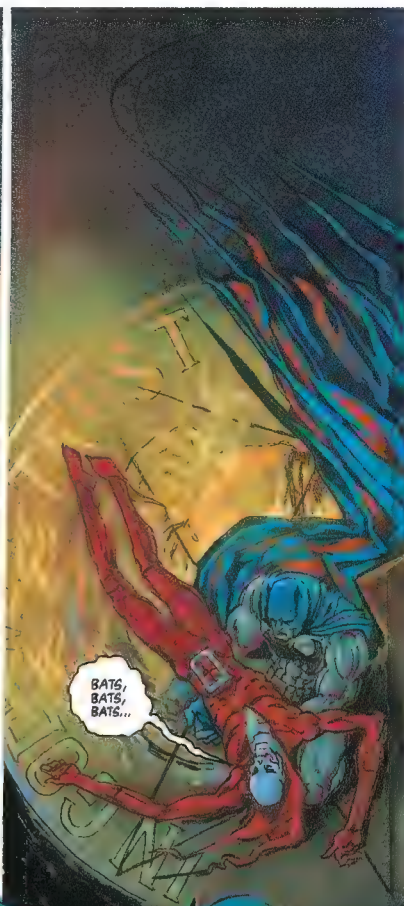
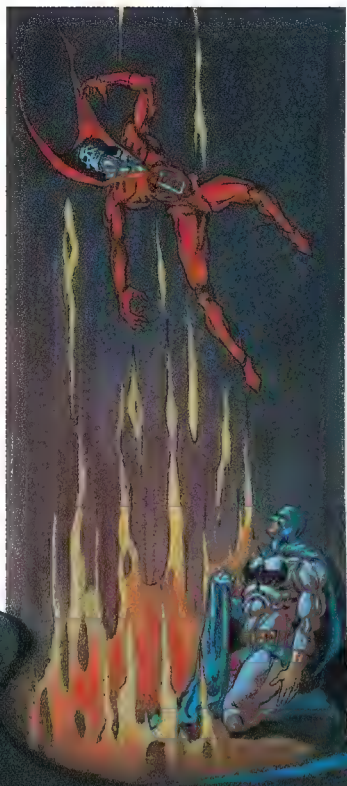
The blood.

Try--

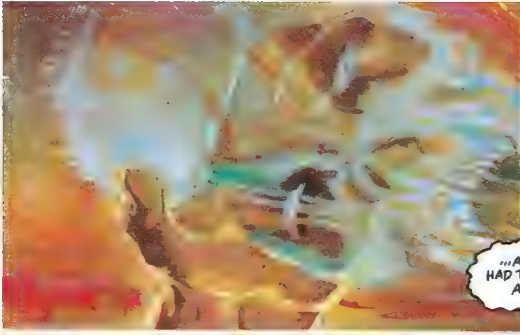


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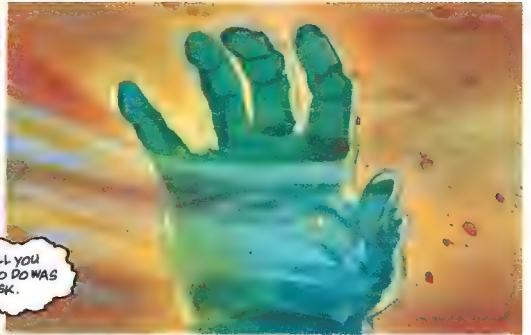








...ALL YOU  
HAD TO DO WAS  
ASK.



MASTER  
BRUCE.  
IT'S THE  
BAT SIGNAL.  
UP IN--

MY WORD!  
QUITE A PARTY  
YOU'VE HAD.

OR IS THIS  
WHAT THEY'RE CALLING  
MODERN ART  
NOWADAYS?



WHAT THIS IS,  
ALFRED, IS MY  
STUPIDITY... RESULTING  
IN MY DESTROYING THE  
VERY SOUL... THE  
IMMORTAL SOUL OF  
AN OLD FRIEND.



OH I  
DO HOPE  
SO.

HEAVEN KNOWS  
YOU'RE NOT GUILTY  
ABOUT ENOUGH  
THINGS AS IT IS.





ANYWAY.

YOU  
SAY THERE'S  
THE SIGNAL?

YES, THOUGH  
I FEAR IT MAY BE  
A TRAP.



PERHAPS.

BUT IT'S STILL  
THE SIGNAL. HOW  
CAN IT GO UN-  
ANSWERED?



WHOA, BATS.  
I'M NOT SAYING  
YOU SHOULDN'T.

BUT BEFORE  
GALLOPING OFF, I'D  
JUST WAIT UNTIL I KNEW  
THE WHOLE PICTURE. IF  
I WAS YOU.



BOSTON?



LATER...

"SO I CAME TO GOTHAM FOR A  
COUPLE OF REASONS. I WAS  
THINKING OF LOOKING YOU UP.  
I FIGURED FOR OLD TIMES' SAKE,  
I'D FLY INTO SOMEONE'S BOB  
AND SAY HELLO."



BUT IT WAS A GREATER "FOR  
OLD TIMES' SAKE" THAT WAS THE  
MAIN REASON I HIT YOUR BURG.  
MY CIRCUS, THE ONE I WAS THE  
HEADLINER OF WHEN I GOT  
OFFED BY THE HOOK.

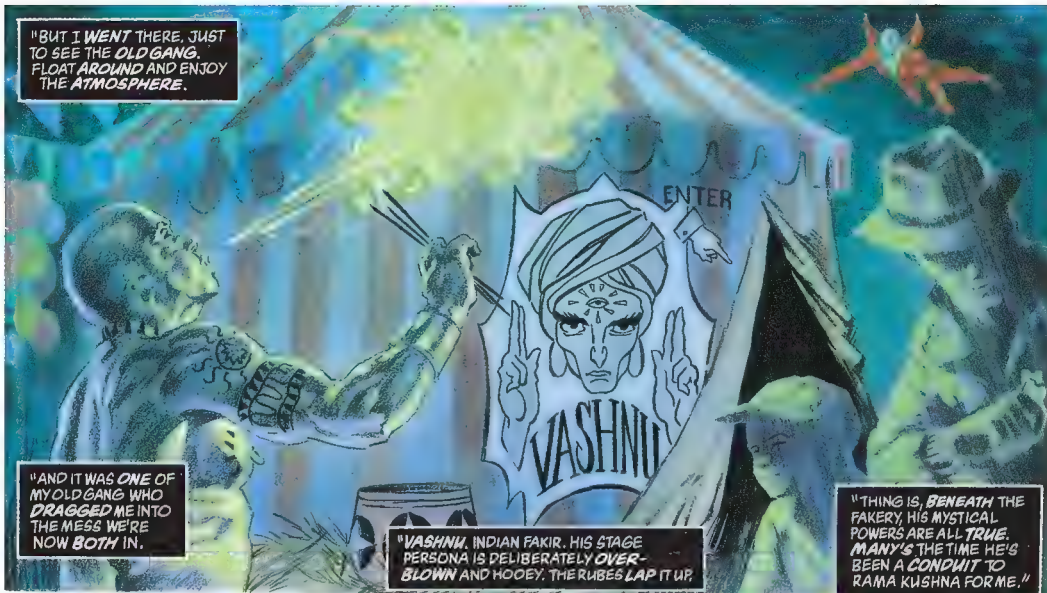
YES, I  
KNOW.

IT'S IN TOWN  
AT THE MOMENT,  
YOU KNOW THAT  
TOO?

ERRR

WELL WHY  
WOULD YOU? YOU  
DON'T LOOK THE TYPE  
FOR PLEASANT FAMILY  
FUN.





"BUT I WENT THERE, JUST TO SEE THE OLD GANG, FLOAT AROUND AND ENJOY THE ATMOSPHERE."

"AND IT WAS ONE OF MY OLD GANG WHO DRAGGED ME INTO THE MESS WE'RE NOW BOTH IN."

"VASHNU, INDIAN FAKIR. HIS STAGE PERSONA IS DELIBERATELY OVERBLOWN AND HOOEY. THE RUBES LAP IT UP."

"THING IS, BENEATH THE FAKERY, HIS MYSTICAL POWERS ARE ALL TRUE. MANY'S THE TIME HE'S BEEN A CONDUIT TO RAMA KUSHNA FOR ME."



"RAMA KUSHNA?"

"GOD."

"OH."



"SO I FLOAT BY, AND SAY HELLO."



"VASHNU SENSES MY PRESENCE LIKE HE SOMETIMES DOES. HE OPENS HIS MOUTH AND SAYS..."



"...MY NAME."

"BOSTON."

"AND THEN EVERYTHING GOES WHITE."





"RAMA?"

"GEEZ, YOU GOT YOUR  
WAYS, HAVEN'T YOU.  
THIS YOUR IDEA OF  
BEING SUBTLE?"

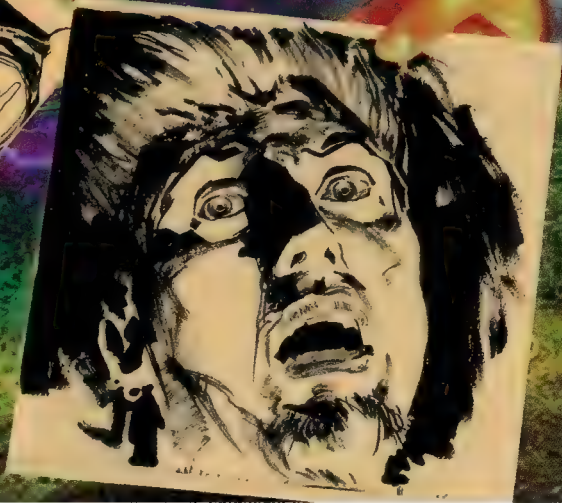
"THERE ISN'T TIME  
FOR SUBTLETY, BOSTON.

"I BROUGHT YOU TO GOTHAM.  
I ARRANGED THE CIRCUS'S  
SCHEDULE AND PLANTED THE  
SEED THAT YOU WOULD  
VISIT THEM HERE."

"FIGURES. I HAVEN'T HAD A  
DECENT THOUGHT OF MY  
OWN SINCE I HOOKED UP WITH  
YOU. WHY WOULD THAT CHANGE?"

"THERE IS A MAN IN GOTHAM CITY.  
FREDERICK CHAPLIN. HE BARTERED  
HIS SOUL, MANY YEARS GONE, FOR  
SUCCESS AND THE RICHES THAT  
BRINGS. FOR DECADES HE'S ENJOYED  
THE BENEFITS OF HIS BARGAIN."

"HIS SOUL? WHO'D  
HE GIVE IT TO?"







"THE DEVIL HAS MANY NAMES, BOSTON. WHICH WOULD YOU HAVE ME USE?"

"OLD NICK, HUH? WELL WHAT OF IT? CHAPLIN DID IT. IT'S HIS PROBLEM."

"CHAPLIN HAS ENJOYED FIFTEEN WONDERFUL YEARS. HE WOULD EXTEND THAT IF HE COULD."

"HE CONTACTED A MAGE, REMY DESHARD, LAST YEAR TO BEGIN A HUNT. TO FIND ANOTHER BORN AT THE EXACT SAME MINUTE, OF THE SAME DAY, OF THE SAME YEAR."

"THE MAN THEY FOUND WAS POOR, AND AN ADDICT. ALBERT YEATS. HE WAS EASILY WOODED BY TALES OF EASY MONEY."

"THE RITE DESHARD PERFORMED INVOLVED VILE ACTS AND HUMAN SACRIFICE. IT TOOK DAYS. AT THE END OF IT, HOWEVER, REMY DESHARD HAD SUCCESSFULLY TRANSFERRED THE PACT CHAPLIN MADE 15 YEARS AGO TO POOR YEATS' SOUL."









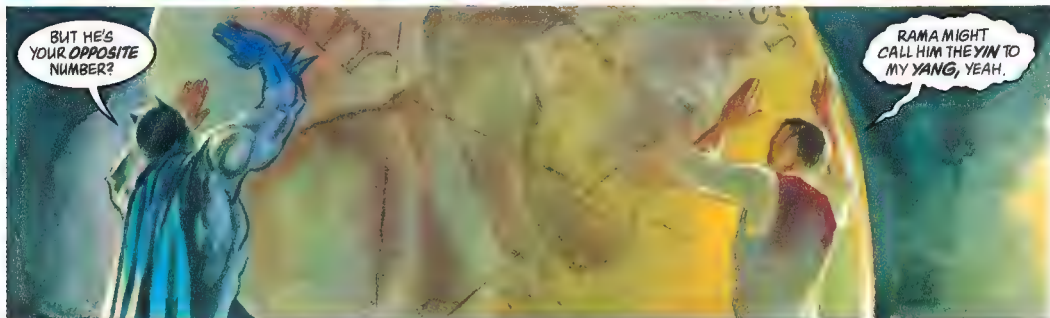
SO THIS SPIRIT?  
IS IT ONE WHO I MIGHT  
HAVE ENCOUNTERED  
PRIOR?

FOR YOUR  
SAKE I HOPE  
NOT.



LIKE IT OR NOT,  
I GUESS I'D CALL MYSELF  
RAMA KUSHNA'S AGENT  
ON EARTH.

THE DEVIL HAS ONE  
TOO. HE ALSO CAME FROM  
THE CIRCUS, THOUGH HOPE-  
FULLY THAT'S WHERE THE  
SIMILARITY BETWEEN  
US ENDS.



BUT HE'S  
YOUR OPPOSITE  
NUMBER?

RAMA MIGHT  
CALL HIM THEYIN TO  
MY YANG, YEAH.

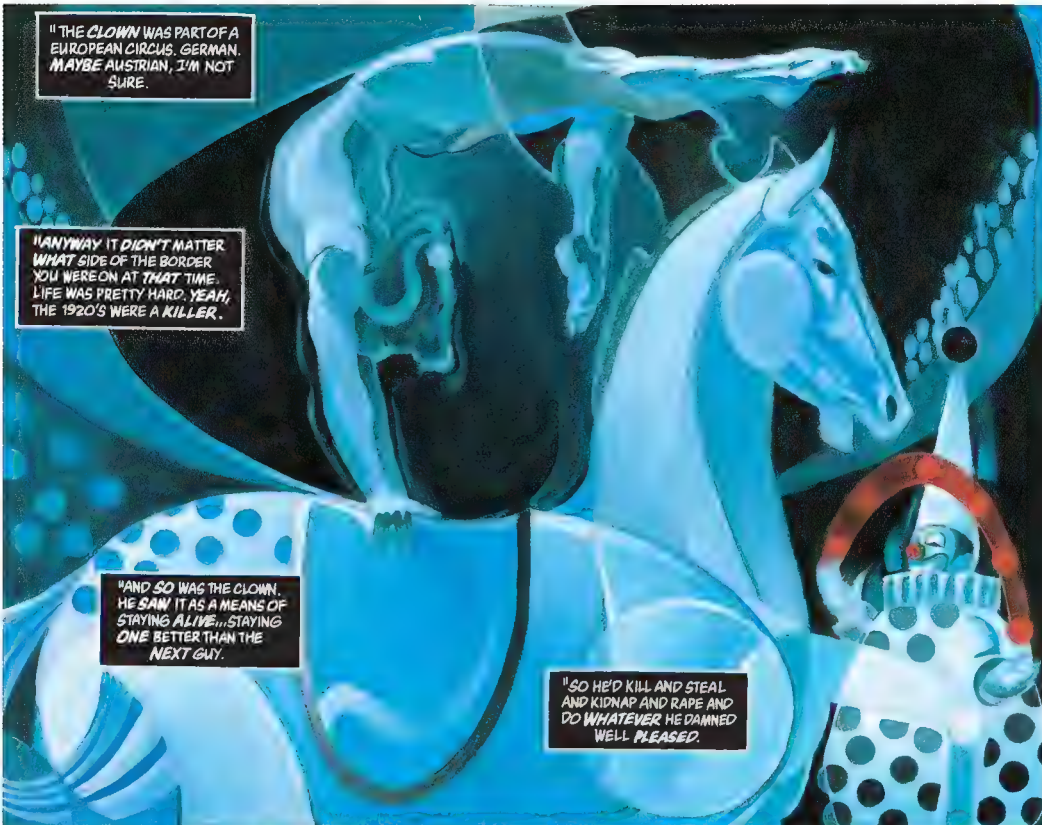


NAME?

A SIMPLE ONE  
FOR SUCH A COMPLEX  
BEING.

HE'S CALLED  
THE CLOWN.






"THE CLOWN WAS PART OF A EUROPEAN CIRCUS. GERMAN. MAYBE AUSTRIAN, I'M NOT SURE.

"ANYWAY IT DIDN'T MATTER WHAT SIDE OF THE BORDER YOU WERE ON AT THAT TIME. LIFE WAS PRETTY HARD. YEAH, THE 1920'S WERE A KILLER.

"AND SO WAS THE CLOWN. HE SAW IT AS A MEANS OF STAYING ALIVE... STAYING ONE BETTER THAN THE NEXT GUY.

"SO HE'D KILL AND STEAL AND KIDNAP AND RAPE AND DO WHATEVER HE DAMNED WELL PLEASED.



"AT FIRST IT WAS FOR THE COIN. LIKE I SAY, GERMANY... AUSTRIA... ALL THOSE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AFTER WWI WERE BAD PLACES TO BREATHE AIR.

"BUT BEFORE LONG THE CLOWN STARTED COMMITTING CRIMES FOR THE SAKE OF IT. 'CAUSE HE ENJOYED BEING BAD.

"AND THE CIRCUS HAD ALWAYS ALREADY MOVED ON AND AWAY WITH HIM BEFORE THE BODIES WERE FOUND... HE MADE SURE OF THAT."





"THIS CONTINUED  
THROUGHOUT THE  
1920'S AND '30'S."

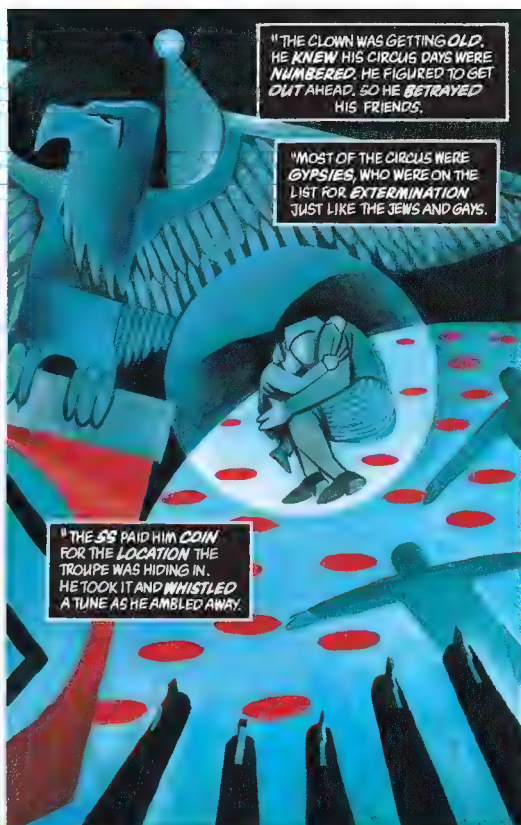
"AND THEN  
THE NAZIS  
CAME."



"THING HE *DIDN'T* KNOW WAS  
THAT *ONE* OF THE PERFORMERS  
HAD BEEN *SENT OUT* FOR FOOD  
AT THE *TIME* THE NAZIS  
SWOOPED IN."

"HE WAS ALIVE AND HUNTING  
THE CLOWN. HE LOCATED HIM  
IN PARIS A YEAR LATER AND  
PUT A STILETTO IN HIM."

"AND THAT'S WHEN THE *DEVIL*...  
SMOKY OLD NICK... HE STEPS UP TO  
THE *PLATE* AND OFFERS THE CLOWN  
THE JOB OF BEING HIS *SPIRITUAL*  
AGENT ON EARTH."



"THE CLOWN WAS GETTING OLD.  
HE *KNEW* HIS CIRCUS DAYS WERE  
*NUMBERED*. HE FIGURED TO GET  
*OUT* AHEAD, SO HE *BETRAYED*  
HIS FRIENDS."

"MOST OF THE CIRCUS WERE  
GYPSIES, WHO WERE ON THE  
LIST FOR *EXTERMINATION*  
JUST LIKE THE JEWS AND GAYS."

"THE *SS* PAID HIM *CASH*  
FOR THE *LOCATION* THE  
TROUPE WAS HIDING IN.  
HE TOOK IT AND *WHISTLED*  
A TUNE AS HE AMBLED AWAY."

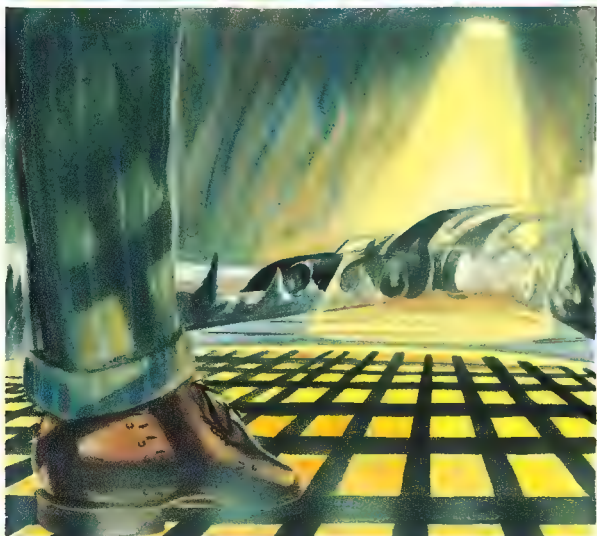
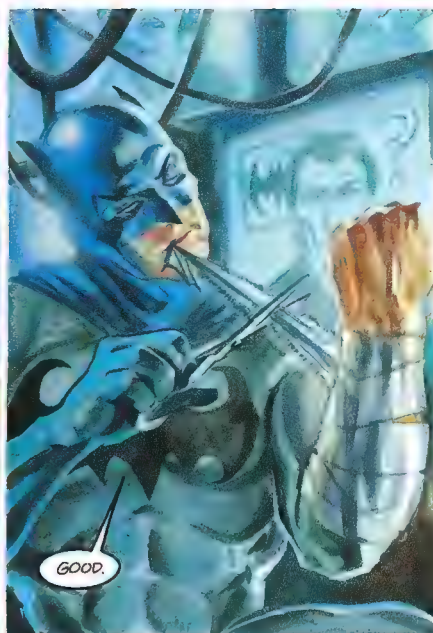


"BEING *EVIL* TO THE MARROW,  
THE *DEVIL* FIGURES THE CLOWN  
TO BE THE *PERFECT* AGENT.  
WHICH HE IS."

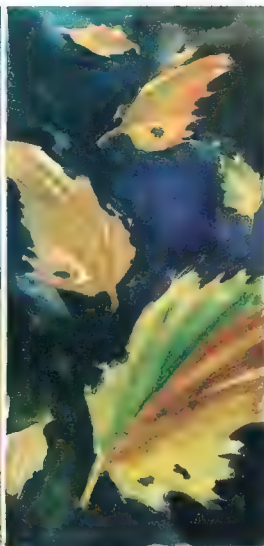
"I'VE *HEARD* OF THE  
CLOWN. FROM A *FEW*  
PLACES I *HEARD* OF  
HIM. BUT WE'VE YET  
TO MEET."

"I *CAN'T* SAY I'VE BEEN LOOKING  
*FORWARD* TO IT, BUT I *DON'T* SEE  
HOW I CAN *AVOID* IT THIS TIME. *NOT*  
WHEN YEATS' SOUL IS THE *PRIZE* AT  
STAKE."





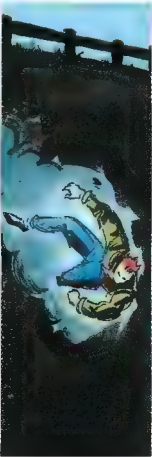
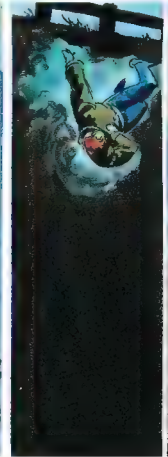




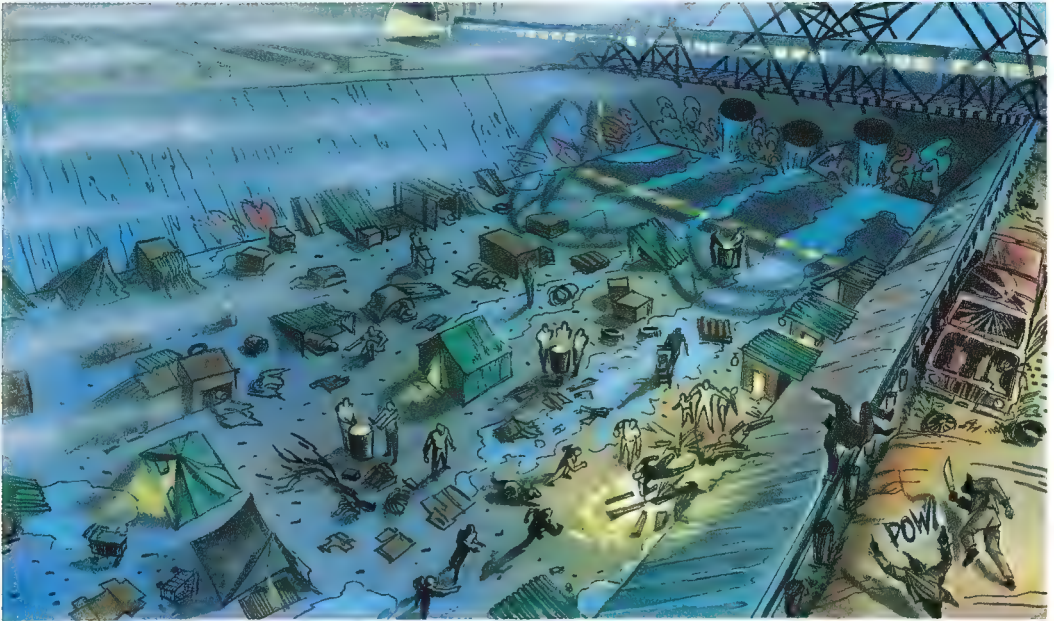












SO THE DUDE  
GIVES ME TEN  
DOLLARS.

FOR WASHING  
HIS WINDSHIELD?  
**COOLNESS!**

FIGURE HE  
MISTOOK A JEFFERSON  
FOR A WASHINGTON.



YEAH.  
**MUST**  
BE--

LEMME  
THROUGH!

**HEY! QUIT  
SHOVING!**

**CRAZY  
MOTHER--**

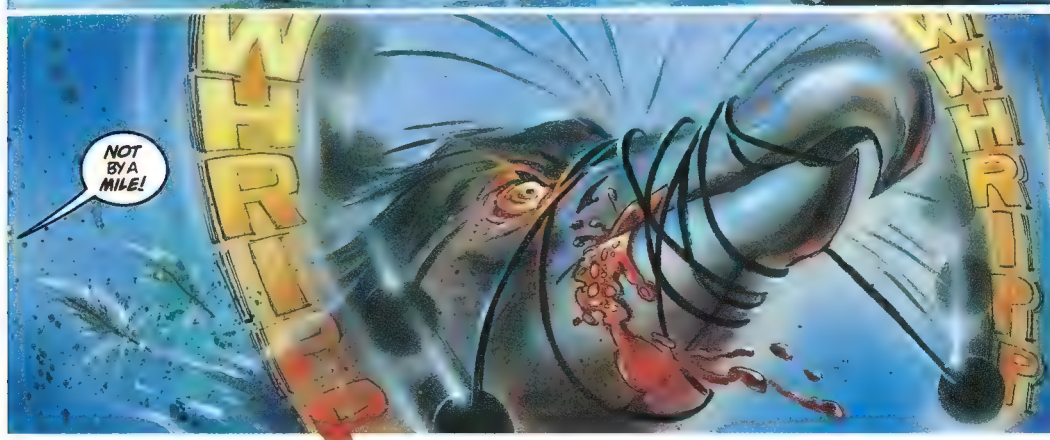
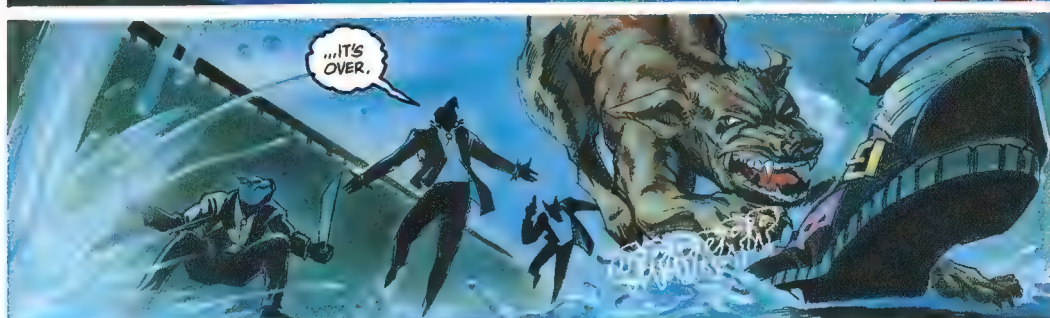


**ALL CARS TO THE PARIS  
OVERPASS. REPORT OF MEN WITH  
ANIMAL HEADS. BELIEVED TO BE  
SOMEHOW RELATED TO THE HUNT  
FOR BATMAN. USE CAUTION.  
REPEAT--**

**SOUNDS LIKE  
DESHARD'S MEN HAVE  
BEATEN US TO SOME-  
THING.**

**LET'S HOPE  
WE CAN BEAT THE  
COPS.**

























A FLUTTER  
OF MOTHS...

ALL RIGHT,  
MEN! YOU CAN  
SHOW YOUR-  
SELVES!



...DRAWN BY  
THE LIGHT.

JIM.

I'M YOUR  
FRIEND.

NOT  
ANYMORE.

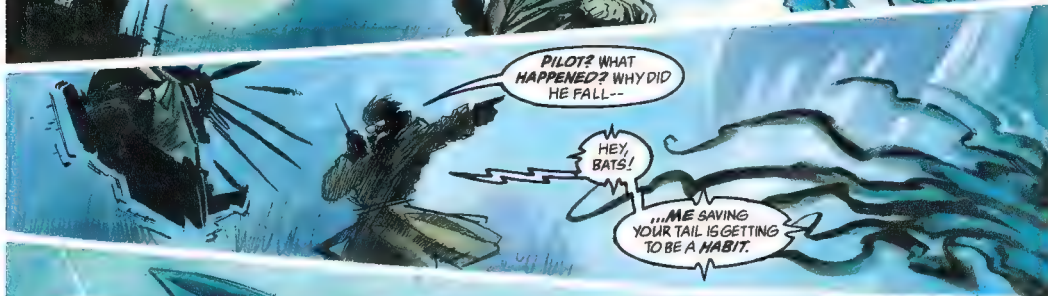


I'VE GOT  
HIM TARGETED,  
COMMISSIONER.

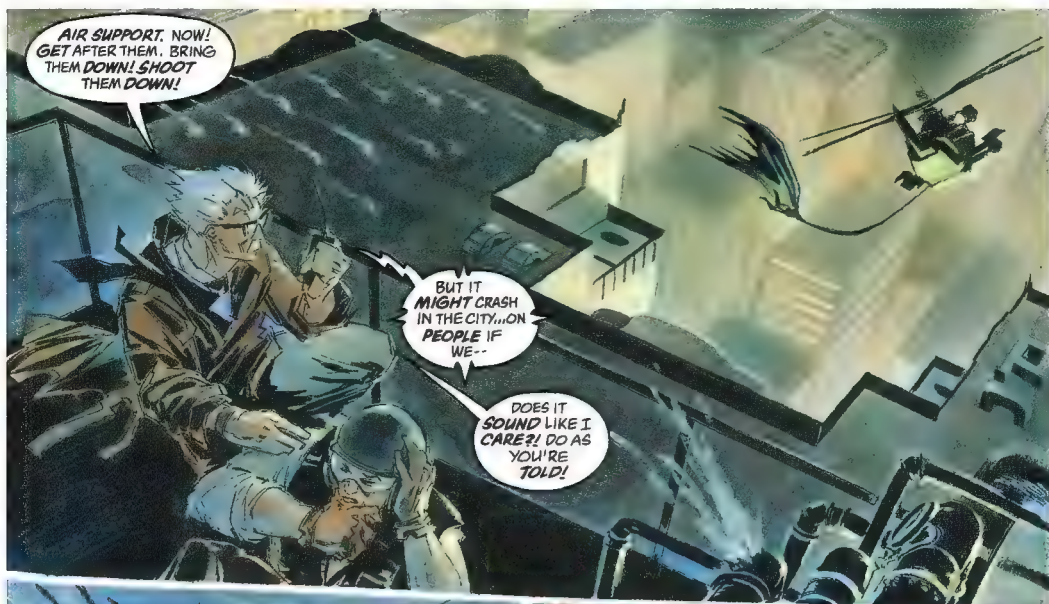
GOOD.

TAKE  
HIM  
OWT...

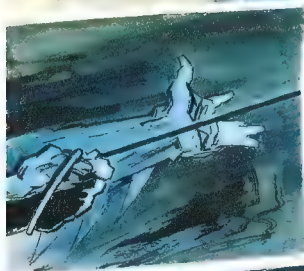












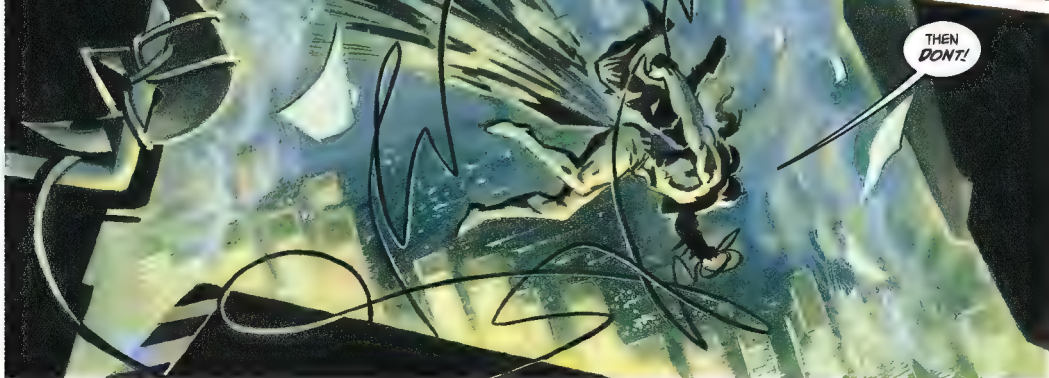




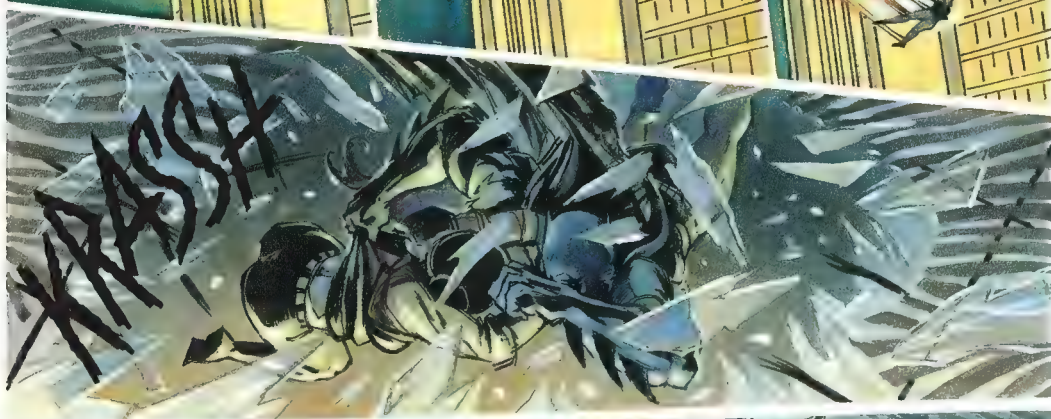
















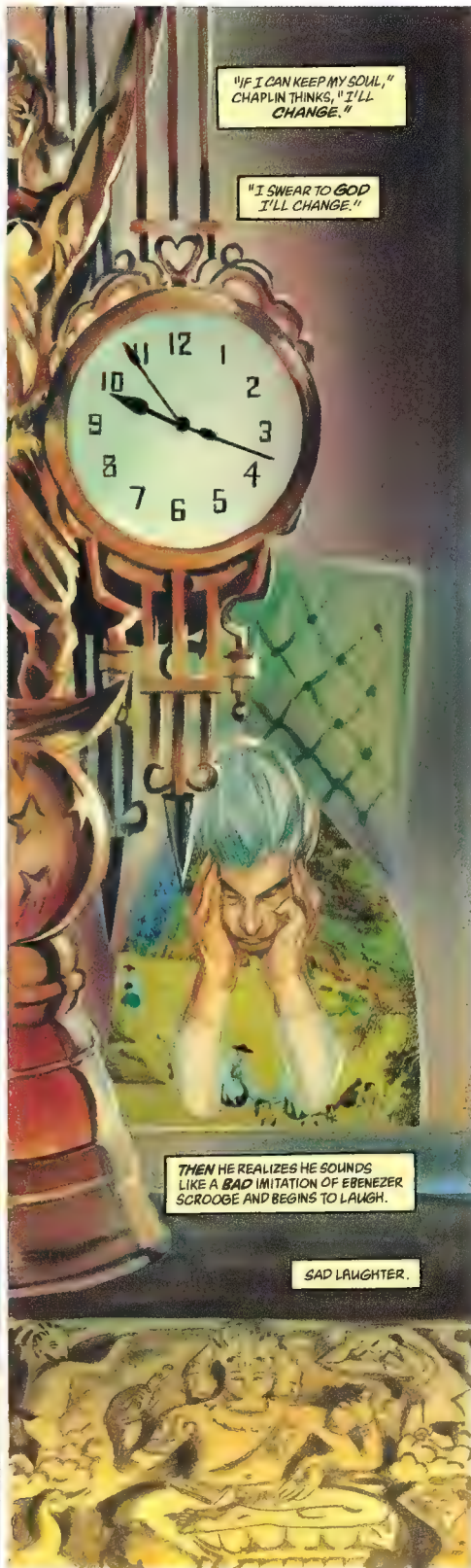
CHAPLIN HAS **FORGOTTEN** THAT A SOUL **DOESN'T** SELL ITSELF.

AND CHAPLIN HAS **FORGOTTEN EVERYTHING** HE'S DONE, AND **ALL** HE'S **HAD** FROM THE SELLING OF IT.

THE **BOOK** IS ONE OF THE **FEW** THINGS HE'S KEPT FROM A **SORRY** CHILDHOOD OF POVERTY AND WANT.



HE **REMEMBERS** LIFE WAS SAD BUT SIMPLE AND **PURE** AND HAD A **BRIGHTNESS** TO ITS EDGES THAT HIS WORLD **NOW**, ALL WARM AND FUR-LINED, HAS **DULLED** AWAY.



"IF I CAN KEEP MY SOUL," CHAPLIN THINKS, "I'LL **CHANGE**."

"I SWEAR TO **GOD** I'LL **CHANGE**."

**THEN** HE REALIZES HE SOUNDS LIKE A **BAD** IMITATION OF EBENEZER SCROOGE AND BEGINS TO LAUGH.

SAD LAUGHTER.





THEIR  
HELICOPTER WENT  
DOWN, COMMISS-  
SIONER.

OH?

BUT BATMAN  
AND THE PILOT  
GOT AWAY.



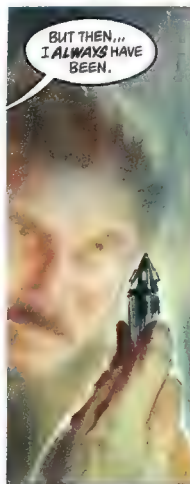
OF COURSE THEY  
DID. DID YOU THINK THE  
OUTCOME OF ALL THIS  
WOULD BE ANY  
DIFFERENT?

SO  
WHAT  
NOW?

YOU RELY ON  
YOUR COMMISSIONER'S  
FORESIGHT.



THE BULLETS I ISSUED  
EVERYONE WERE AN EXPERIMENTAL  
TYPE. WE ONLY GOT A SHIPMENT  
FOR TRIAL RECENTLY. FORTUNATE.  
DON'T YOU THINK?



BUT THEN, ..  
I ALWAYS HAVE  
BEEN.



EACH BULLET HAS A HOMING  
BEACON FITTED JUST UNDER ITS HEAD.  
UNLESS I'M MISTAKEN, BATMAN IS  
CARRYING ONE SUCH BULLET IN  
HIS SHOULDER.

COMMISSIONER.  
WE'RE GETTING THEM.  
THEY'RE ON THE RADAR  
SCREEN.

WHERE  
ARE THEY  
?



ALL UNITS TO CLEMENT PARK.  
HILLS BROTHERS' CIRCUS IN CLEMENT  
PARK. BATMAN IS BELIEVED TO BE  
THERE AND ALL CAUTION SHOULD  
BE USED IN APPREHENDING--

CLEMENT  
PARK, REMY.

YEAH, I  
HEARD...





"...HILLS BROTHERS' CIRCUS."









I WAS WORRIED YOU WOULDN'T COME BACK FOR ME. DIDN'T KNOW WHERE TO RUN.

YOUR RUNNING'S OVER, YEATS. I HAVE MEANS OF GETTING YOU OUT OF TOWN. I HAVE PLACES OUT OF TOWN WHERE YOU CAN STAY.



I WAS JUST GONNA SMUGGLE HIM OUT OF GOTHAM WITH THE CIRCUS.

OH, I THINK AFTER ALL MR. YEATS HAS ENDURED HE DESERVES A BETTER MODE OF TRANSPORTATION THAN THAT.

WHY ARE YOU GUYS DOING ALL THIS ANYWAY?

ERR... YOU'RE AN INNOCENT, YEATS. ME AND THE BAT GUY HERE SAVE INNOCENTS.

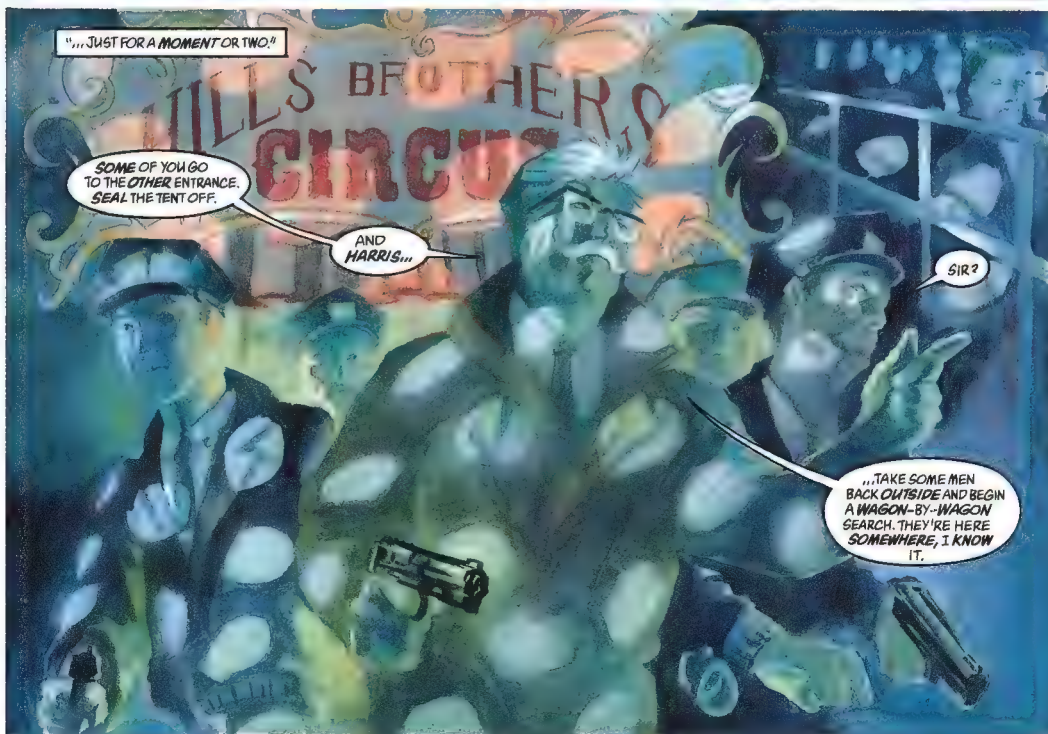


I'M NOT THAT CLEAN, GUYS. DON'T THINK I'M A SAINT OR NOTHING.

WE KNOW. BUT I DOUBT YOU'VE DONE ANYTHING WORTHY OF LOSING YOUR SOUL.

SO LET'S GET YOU OUT OF HERE...

ERR, I THINK WE MAY HAVE TO PUT THAT PLAN ON HOLD, OLD BUDDY...



"...JUST FOR A MOMENT OR TWO."

SOME OF YOU GO TO THE OTHER ENTRANCE. SEAL THE TENT OFF.

AND HARRIS...

SIR?

...TAKE SOME MEN BACK OUTSIDE AND BEGIN A WAGON-BY-WAGON SEARCH. THEY'RE HERE SOMEWHERE, I KNOW IT.





SEE, I SAID  
YOU'D BE FINE HERE.  
THEY THINK YOU'RE A  
PART OF THE SHOW.

NOW FIND  
YEATS. WE HAVEN'T  
MUCH TIME.



I'LL TAKE THE  
POLICE. YOU TAKE  
DESHARD AND HIS  
FREAKS.

YOU GOT  
IT, BATS.

YEATS. USE  
THE CONFUSION  
TO RUN. GET AS  
FAR FROM THIS  
AS YOU CAN.



NO. AFTER WHAT YOU  
GUYS HAVE DONE FOR ME,  
I'M THROUGH RUNNING.

I'M NOT LEAVING  
YOU. WE GET OUT OF  
THIS TOGETHER OR  
NOT AT ALL.

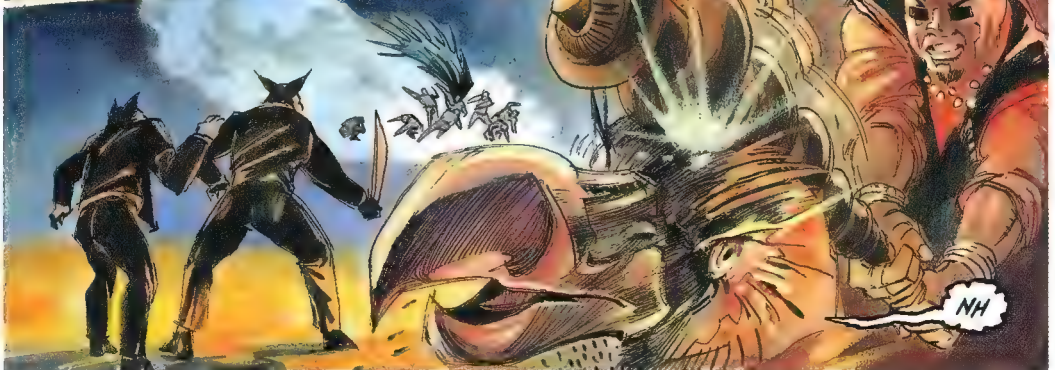
ALL RIGHT,  
THEN STAY OUT  
OF SIGHT...



...AND  
OUT OF THE  
WAY.

PSSTT

TRICK OR TREAT,  
MY THREE ANIMAL  
CRACKERS.



NH





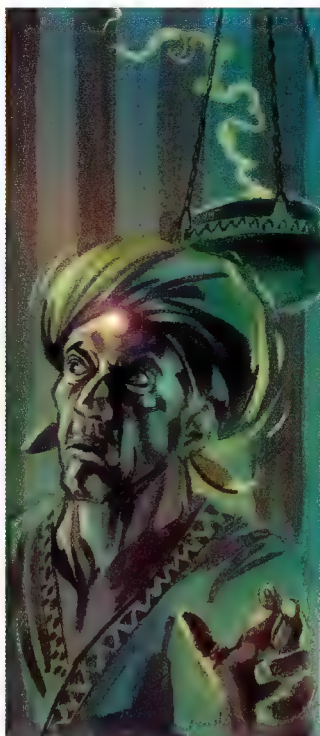
















CRATERS OF HAZE PLUMMET  
THROUGH THE SOUND OF NOTHING.

IF I COULD  
*ONLY* KILL  
YOU!

ACROBAT AND FOOL BEGIN THEIR  
DANCE IN TRIPLE TIME, THE SUNLIGHT  
OF A DARK SUN FALLING UPON THEIR  
FACES LIKE A WARM SEPTEMBER SIGH.





AND THEN THE HEAT IS HELLISH  
FIERCE, AND THEN COOL LIKE  
GREEN GLASS LEFT TO MOLD  
IN THE DARKNESS.



THE RICHNESS OF CRISP SHATTERING,  
MARBLED AND FINE, IS A LOOSENESS  
AROUND THIS MERRY PAIR.

THE DANCE BECOMES WARM, LIKE A TANGO  
OR SAMBA. THE ARDOR OF THEIR HATE, SO  
FIERCE AND LIKE THAT OF DOGS, THAT IT  
SEEMS ALMOST A ROMANCE.








AND THEN STATIC, AND THEN SILVER.  
AND THEN COOL LIKE GREEN GLASS  
LEFT TO MOLD IN THE DARKNESS.



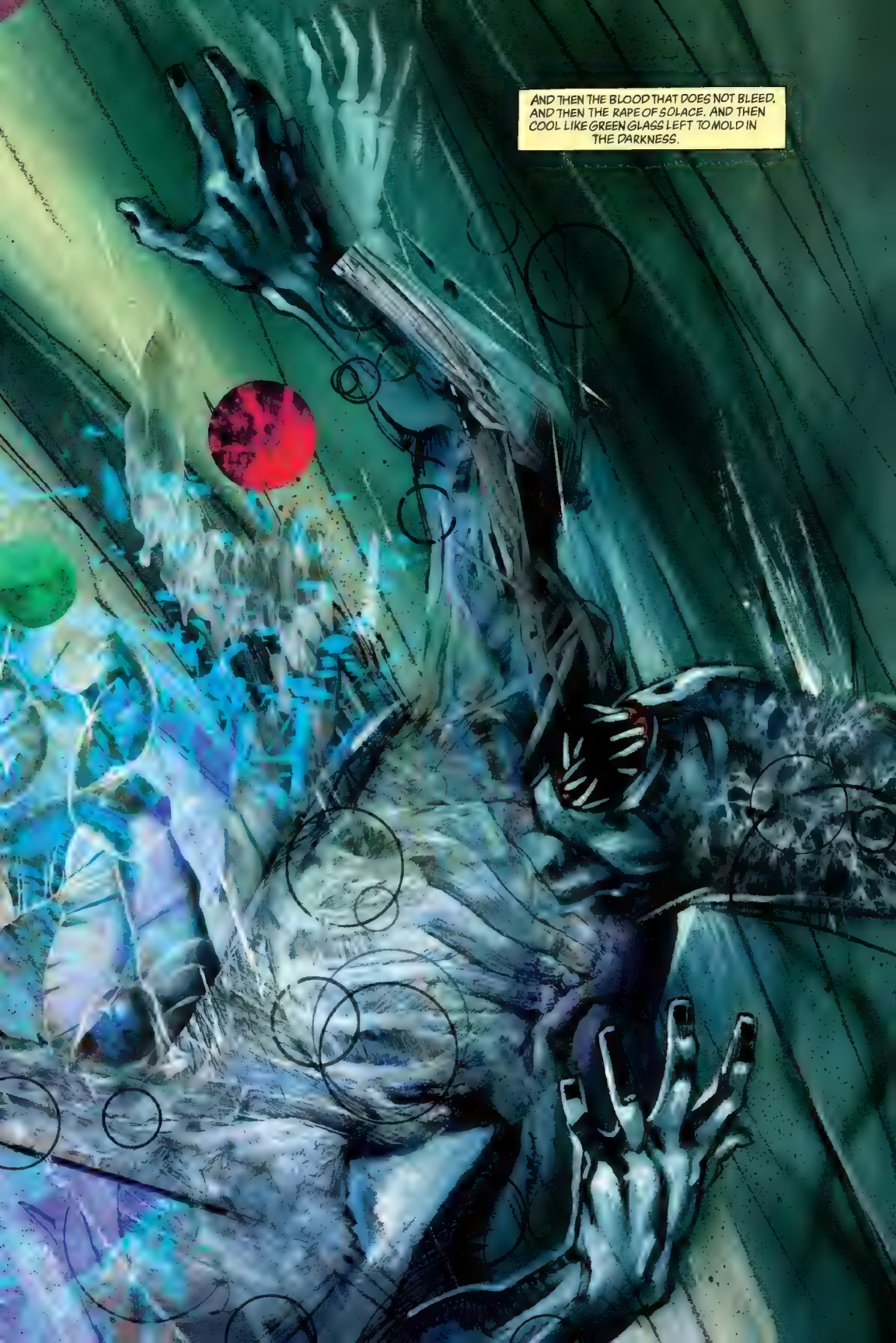


THE CEILING BEGINS TO RISE, HIGH.  
IT TURNS TO BUTTERFLIES, GLASS  
FALLS WITH BRIGHT DELAY.

THE DANCE ENDS AND BEGINS AGAIN. SLOW LIKE A WALTZ  
AT A RETIREES SOCIAL, WITH THE PARTNERS WARY OF JOINTS  
AND HIPS AND THIN, REEDY FLESH. BUT AS THE MUSIC EBBS  
TO A QUIET BLEAT, SO NEW TUNES BEGIN. A CHOIR OF  
SEAGULLS AND CAULIFLOWERS.



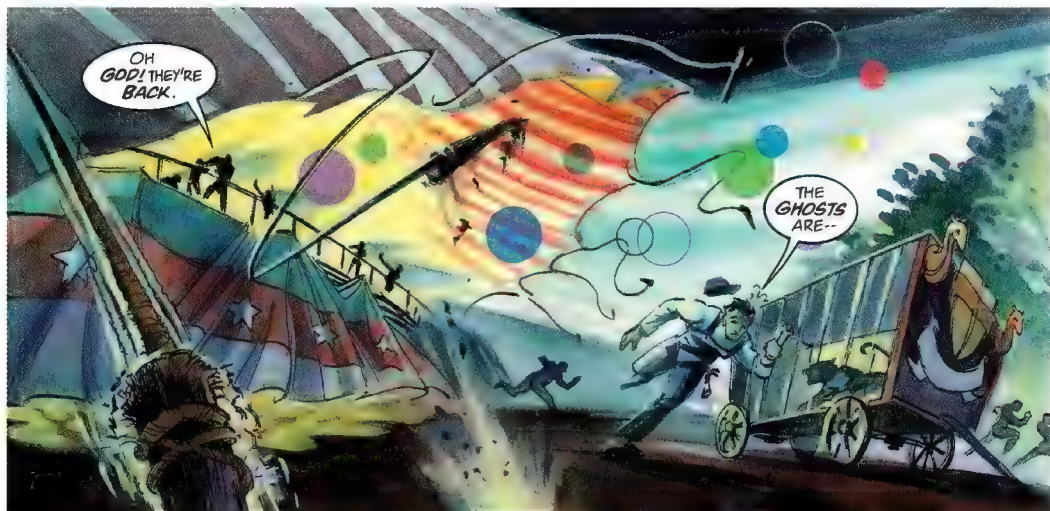
AND THEN THE BLOOD THAT DOES NOT BLEED,  
AND THEN THE RAPE OF SOLACE, AND THEN  
COOL LIKE GREEN GLASS LEFT TO MOLD IN  
THE DARKNESS.















I'LL KILL HIM, YEATS. I'LL KILL BATMAN.

DO YOU WANT THAT?

HE'S DONE SO MUCH FOR YOU. FOR YOUR WORTHLESS SELF. AND I'LL KILL HIM FOR IT.



DO YOU WANT THAT?



NO!



ALBERT. IT'S ME. BOSTON.

LISTEN. BATMAN WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO SACRIFICE YOURSELF FOR HIM.



I KNOW BATMAN. I KNOW WHAT HE'D WANT.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS.

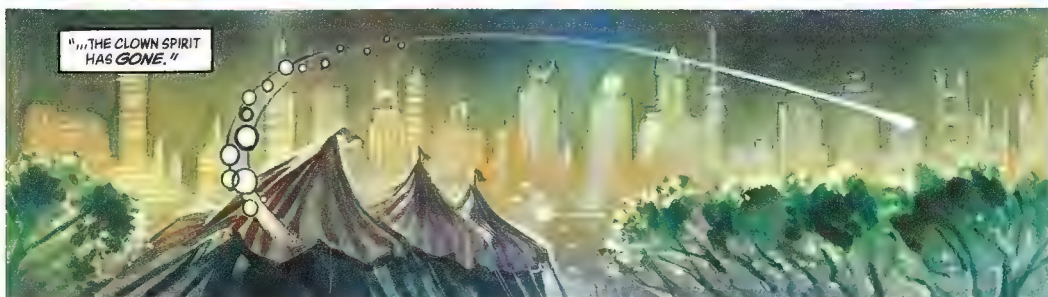
OH YES I DO.



I CAN'T RUN FROM MY MISTAKES. NOT ANYMORE. I'M ALREADY THE REASON THOSE POOR PEOPLE IN THE RESTAURANT WERE MURDERED.

MY LIFE WILL BE OVER SOON ENOUGH ANYWAY. WHY SHOULD I PUT IT OFF? IF I CAN SAVE SOMEONE LIKE BATMAN. IF I CAN DO ONE DECENT THING IN MY WHOLE MISERABLE LIFE, THEN MAYBE MY PASSING WILL MEAN SOMETHING.









NO WORD FROM  
REMY DESHARD.  
NOTHING.

EXCEPT  
THE CLOCK.



DESHARD HAS FAILED  
AND CHAPLIN HAS LOST.

CHAPLIN SIGNS WITH  
SAD FEAR, WHISPERS  
THREE WORDS...

GOD,  
FORGIVE  
ME.



...AND AWAITS  
HIS FATE IN  
SILENCE.





I HAD TO CONCENTRATE WHILE ME AND THE CLOWN HAD OUR SCRAP. THOUGHT MY HEAD WAS GONNA BURST FROM IT. HURT LIKE HELL.

I HOPED THAT THE ENERGY OF HIS ECTOPLASM 'N' MINE TOGETHER LOOKED... COMBINED MIGHT MANIFEST ITSELF.



HOPED THAT SOMEONE MIGHT SEE IT. ONE OR TWO PEOPLE WITH DORMANT PSYCHIC ABILITY, AND YOU'D HAVE WITNESSES THAT'D CLEAR YOU MAYBE. OTHERWISE YOU COULD SWEAR ON A STACK OF BIBLES AND NO ONE WOULD BUY THAT IT WASN'T YOU DID THOSE MURDERS IN THE RESTAURANT.



YOU DID FINE, BOSTON. YOU SAVED ME. I OWE YOU.

THAT'S WHY I TALKED SO MUCH WHILE ME AND THE CLOWN FOUGHT. GET HIM TALKING 'N' MAYBE SOMEONE WOULD HEAR WHAT HE SAID.



THIRTY-NINE PEOPLE SAW YOUR FIGHT. MORE THAN ENOUGH TO CLEAR ME.

AND YOUR FIGHT WITH THE CLOWN, THROUGH THE VARIOUS DIMENSIONS AND LEVELS OF EXISTENCE.



THAT TOO. IT DELAYED EVENTS LONG ENOUGH... BOUGHT YEATS TIME...

...AND MADE CHAPLIN'S RUN OMT.

LIKE I SAY, BOSTON. I OWE YOU.

JUST TRUST ME NEXT TIME, OKAY?



BELIEVE IN ME.

I WILL, BOSTON. I PROMISE.



PROMISE WHAT? AND WHO'S BOSTON?





ALBERT, I'VE LEARNED THAT YOU'RE **NOT** WELL. THESE ARE **DOCTORS** WHO WORK FOR A **WEALTHY** FRIEND OF MINE. GO WITH THEM.

THEY'LL DO WHAT THEY CAN FOR YOU. THEY'LL MAKE SURE YOU'RE **COMFORTABLE**.



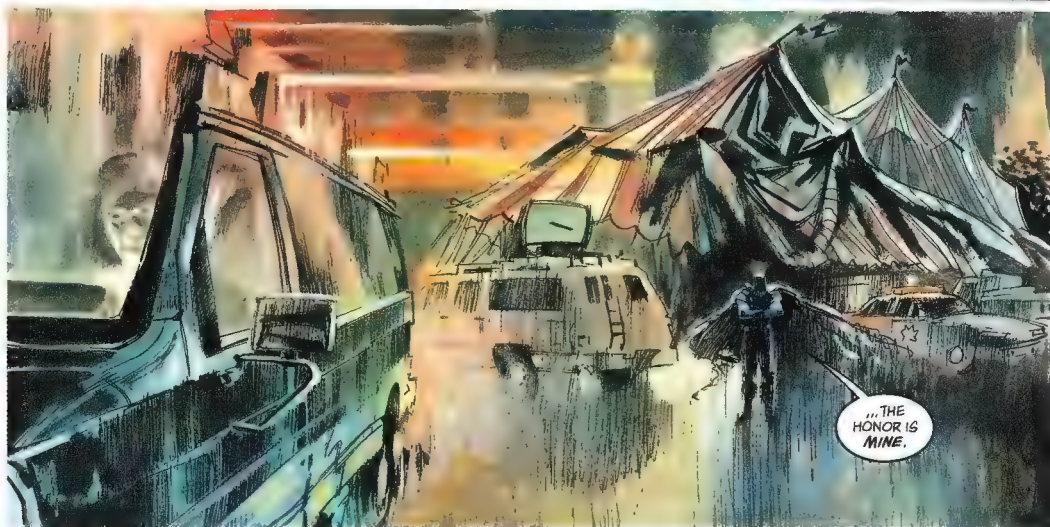
I'M NOT EXPECTING MIRACLES, BATMAN. I **KNOW** THE SCORE. IF I CAN SEE THE END OF THE YEAR, I'LL BE **THANKFUL**.



IT'S BEEN AN **HONOR** TO MEET YOU, BATMAN. EVEN THOUGH I WAS **NEVER** A GUY ON THE UP AND UP, I **ALWAYS** ADMIRED YOU. THE **BRAVE** THINGS YOU DID... YOUR **HEROISM**.


NO, YEATS. TODAY YOU WERE THE **HERO**.

AND REGARDING OUR **MEETING**...



...THE **HONOR** IS **MINE**.



A full-page illustration of Batman in a dark, gothic setting. He is shown from the waist up, wearing his iconic suit and cape, with a determined expression. He is holding a long, thin, dark object, possibly a whip or a piece of fabric, which trails off to the right. In the background, a large, ornate clock face is visible, showing the time as approximately 10:10. The scene is dimly lit, with a mix of dark blues, greys, and hints of red and orange light, creating a somber and mysterious atmosphere.

*Ghosts and devils and magical things.*

*I hate such times...when a bitter autumn brew infects my life with strangeness. I can, at best, but hope to stem the tide of.*

*Criminals are a superstitious, cowardly lot. They fear the dark and the night. What would they do if they knew that within those shadows lurk fears beyond even those imagined by evil hearts?*

*Yet I must fight these terrors.*

*Thanking whatever powers there be, for beings like Boston Brand to aid me in such fickle wars.*

*Yes. Beings like Deadman.*

*And men like Albert Yeats.*



YEATS IS  
LUCKY.

HE LIVES TO  
SEE MARCH.

HE THINKS OF A GREAT APRIL  
FOOL'S JOKE TO PLAY ON ONE  
OF THE NURSES AND HOPES  
HE'LL BE AROUND TO DO IT.

ALAS.



THAT IS  
NOT TO BE.







...WE GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE.

I'M ALIVE?

NO, BROTHER. YOU'RE DEAD. SEE?

MY BODY. STILL AND COLD.

IT *ISN'T* YOU ANYMORE. YOUR *SOUL* IS THE IMPORTANT PART. THE PART THAT GOES ON.



WHO ARE YOU?

I'M BOSTON BRAND. REMEMBER? I WAS THE SPOOK HELPING BATMAN.

OH, WELL. NICE TO MEET... ERR... SEE YOU, FINALLY.



YEAH. THIS DYING THING CAN BE A BIT WEIRD. THE TRANSITION. THOUGHT I'D COME AND HELP YOU THROUGH IT. YOU GOTTA GO ON. HEAVEN. ALL THAT. FOR NOW AT LEAST.

WE'RE GOING TO HEAVEN?




YOU ARE. I CAN'T. I'M EARTH-BOUND. BUT I CAN TAKE YOU PART WAY.

KNOWING WHO YOU ARE, I'D BE PROUD TO ACCOMPANY YOU AS FAR AS I CAN.



OH, 'N' LET ME BE THE FIRST TO SAY, BUDDY...



A watercolor illustration of two men holding hands. The man on the left is muscular, with a reddish-brown skin tone, and is wearing a red singlet. The man on the right is thinner, with a greyish-blue skin tone, and is wearing a dark blue t-shirt and dark pants. They are both facing away from the viewer, holding hands in the center. The background is a mix of blue, green, and white, with some faint, sketchy lines suggesting a landscape or sky. A speech bubble is positioned above the man on the right.

...HAVE YOU  
GOT A LIFE  
AHEAD OF  
YOU.



# BATMAN

IS A  
MURDERER.

# A MANIAC.

Or so it seems to everyone witnessing his slaughter of a restaurant full of customers. Batman himself has no memory of the event. Could it be true? Could his obsession have finally given way to madness?

Batman investigates this mystery uncovering secrets and lies and how the destiny of one man might change the world. He'll meet ghosts both bad and good — the latter being Deadman, his friend and ally in many past tales. Deadman must help Batman again as their foes line up to include not just evil millionaires and mages—men who walk the earth—but also a supernatural emissary of Satan himself, hungering for souls.

A tale of mystery  
and the supernatural...  
and death and glory.